Chronicles

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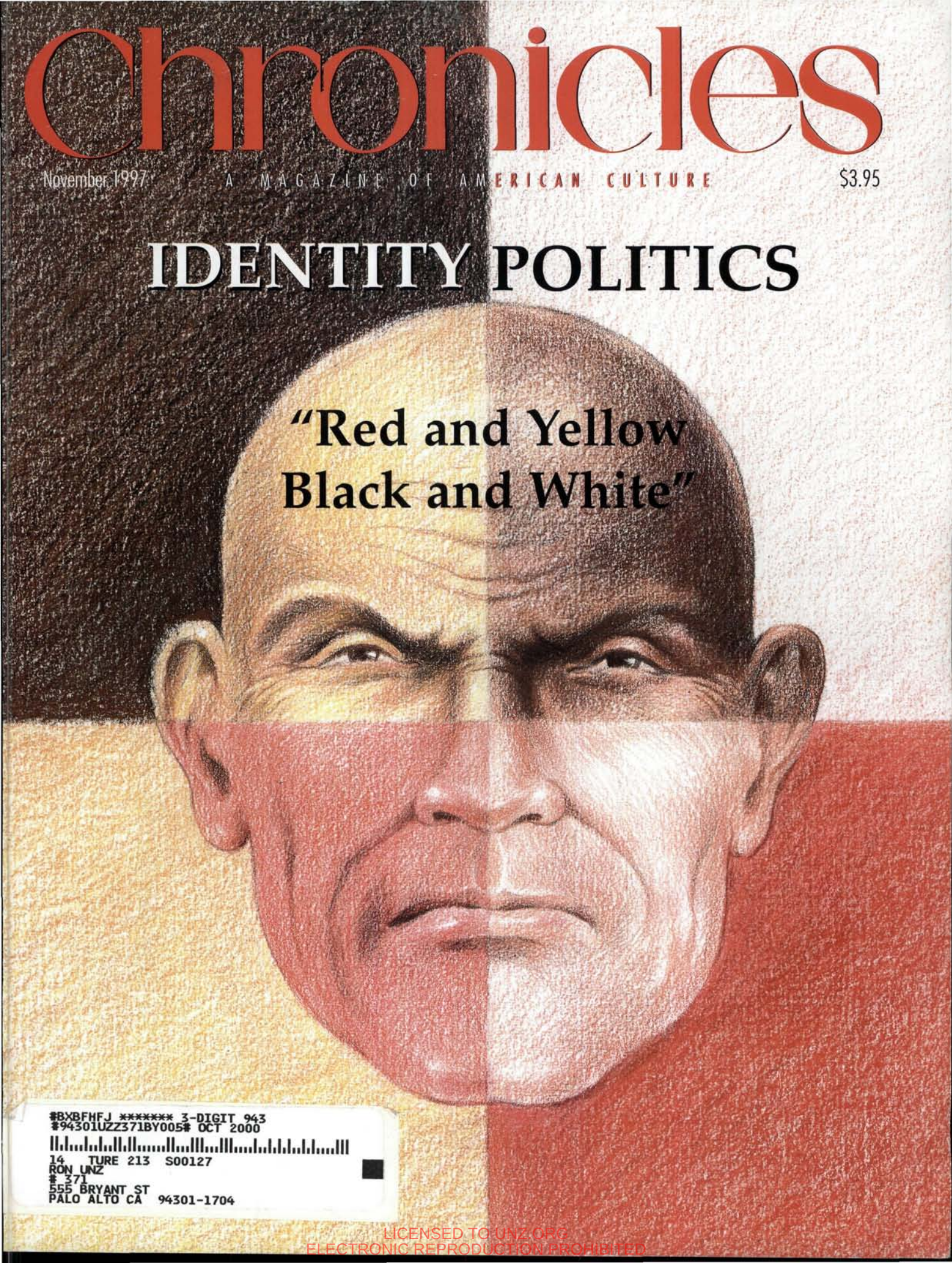

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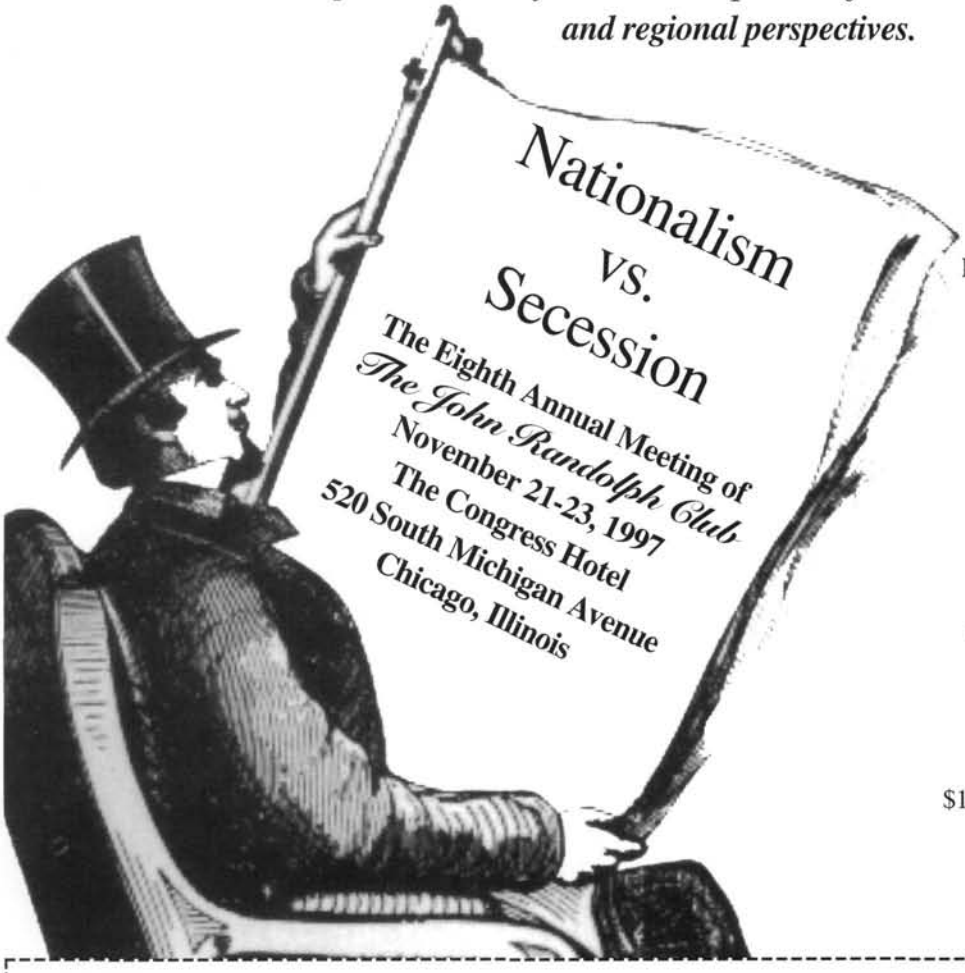

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A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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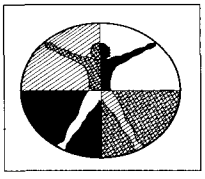

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NOVEMBER 1997/3

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Chronicles
A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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On NATO and Eastern Europe

The arguments by Srdja Trifkovic against the addition of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to NATO (Cultural Revolutions, August) are reminiscent of my variation of an old Noel Coward ditty: "Don't let's be beastly to the Russians / For you can't deprive a gangster of his gun. / Though they've been a little nasty to the Czechs and Poles and such. / (But I don't suppose those people really mind it very much.)"

The fact is that those people do mind it very much. Before the Bolshevik gangsters, there were the Romanov gangsters, and if the commissars of Sovietdom were murdering swine, so were the ministers of the czars. Poland, in particular, was occupied for nearly 200 years by the Russians; and any Polish historian will tell you that Reds and Whites were both enslaving sadists of the first magnitude. How, we must ask Trifkovic, did it happen that Russia was the place where the Bolsheviks got to power by indigenous forces? Would he claim, à la the Black Hundred enthusiasts of Pamyat, that it was all due to some "Jewish conspiracy"?

The fact is that Russia was and is an ideal place for totalitarian rule. Trifkovic glories in the wonders of Russian Orthodoxy. Tell that to someone who is ignorant of its history. Russian Orthodoxy is one part Constantinople and two parts Karakorum. The Patriarch of Moscow, Aleksey II, for some years was a ranking member of the KGB, and his predecessors in the czarist years cheerfully applauded genocide in the Caucasus and in Central Asia, pogroms of Jews and Poles, and bloody imperial expansion everywhere. Recently, the Duma has excluded both Catholicism and Protestantism from acceptable religions in the new Russia (in the interests of multiculturalism, they permit not only Russian Orthodoxy but Islam, Buddhism, and Judaism). Yes, there needs to be a *cordon sanitaire* around Russia. Only in this way will the Russian people have a chance to look inward, see what it is that has enslaved them until now, and decide whether they are willing to take a chance on freedom.

In the United States, we have bridges, cities, and counties named after Kossuth, Pulaski, and Kosciuszko. I am unaware of anybody here wanting to name something after Suvorov, Romanov, or Tukhachevsky. Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic have been part of the West for 1,000 years. If they were relegated to Russian occupation for 45 years following World War II, that only intensified the wishes of the people from these countries to be recognized as what they have always been: the guardians of the eastern borders of the West. Those who would deny them their place in NATO simply because it is feared that the Russian bear might be offended are more than a little bit despicable. By taking the Poles, Czechs, and Hungarians into NATO, we redeem the honor that Russophilic appeasers besmirched at Yalta.

There is this curious thing we have in the West, Mr. Trifkovic, called honor. Deal with it.

—James R. Thompson
Professor, Rice University
Houston, TX

Dr. Trifkovic Replies:

Professor Thompson does not disclose his academic specialty, but let us hope it is not history, lest his students remain in the dark as to how "Russia was the place where the Bolsheviks got to power by indigenous forces." They would not be told that Marxism itself was a Western import into Russia's body-politic, and that it would not have "got to power" without the aid of nonindigenous forces such as the Kaiser's government, the bayonets of several hundred thousand freed German and Austrian POWs, and the propaganda and monetary contributions of "progressives" the world over.

Professor Thompson's students should be intrigued by his claim that Russia occupied Poland "for nearly 200 years." In fact, Russia acquired majority-Polish territories only at the Congress of Vienna in 1815, barely 100 years before Poland's rebirth as a sovereign state in 1918. Russia's previous annexations had consisted of lands inhabited overwhelmingly by Orthodox Byelorussians, Ukrainians, and Great Russians, which

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had been conquered by the Poles before 1772. During the previous three centuries, these people had experienced at the hands of the Poles—supposedly members of a "higher" Western civilization—a degree of oppression that exceeded anything with which the pre-Soviet Russian state can be charged. This oppression continued unabated under Pilsudski and his successors in this century, fatally undermining Poland's moral standing and survivability in the run-up to the tragedy of September 1939.

For at least the last half-century of its existence, that Russian-ruled Kingdom of Poland—not sovereign, but autonomous, with its own governmental system and army—was short on freedoms but long on liberty. Pre-1914 Warsaw was a true hotbed of intellectual and artistic creativity. Yes, it was under those czarist "murdering swine" and "enslaving sadists of the first magnitude" that Europe witnessed the flowering of a vibrant Polish national culture epitomized in Sienkiewicz, Prus, and Orzeszkowa, and their modernistic offspring of the Young Poland movement. (As for bloodshed, fewer people were executed for crimes in the Kingdom of Poland between 1867 and 1914 than in those Polish lands ruled by the presumably benevolent Hapsburgs and Hohenzollerns during that same period.)

Let us also hope that Professor Thompson does not teach religion. Anyone who thinks "Russian Orthodoxy is one part Constantinople and two parts Karakorum" evidently has no notion of what Orthodox Christianity—whether Russian, Greek, Serbian, Romanian, or, for that matter, American—actually is. If the professor is even remotely interested in understanding Orthodoxy, perhaps he should visit us here at Rose Hill College in Aiken, South Carolina.

Six millennia of civilization have produced three supremely great literatures: Greek, English, and Russian. Trying to exclude the culture which produced the last one from the common legacy of Euro-Christian civilization is as futile as it is ludicrous. The Russians know the darker side of humanity, but they also understand the extraordinary capacity of the human soul for sacrifice and love, and they possess the ability to accept both sides of man with greater equanimity than many Westerners. They still value humility over pride, and approach God in a spirit of meekness. They gave depth and feeling to formal movements initially intended only for the aristocracy of Europe, and turned ballet into an uplifting and popular art. Their music still stirs hearts all over the world. These manifestations of beauty, which Russia produced so brilliantly, are perhaps what we need to rediscover now, to offset the coldness and impersonality of a brazenly materialistic, secular modern world.

Finally, I am thankful to Professor Thompson for the timely reminder that "there is this curious thing we have in the West . . . called honor." We Orthodox Christians need to be reminded, indeed, because "this curious thing" has been too frequently absent from Western attitudes to us for centuries now. The Crusaders' sack of Orthodox Constantinople in 1204, in lieu of the liberation of Jerusalem, opened the floodgates to the Turk. Before the first Cossack rode into the Mazowian plain, we saw two truly murderous and ruinous "Western" conquests of Moscow (by the Poles in 1612 and Napoleon exactly two centuries later). When we are subjected to real genocide—as the Serbs were at the hands of Croatian Ustashi between 1941 and 1945—insult is added to injury by retrospectively turning victims into culprits. As for those "Russophilic appeasers" of Yalta, were they not the ones who signed the death warrant for millions of Russian POWs and anticommunists, by having them forcibly repatriated to Stalin's firing squads and the Gulag?

Amid the unprecedented collapse of Christian civilization all over the "Western" world, to Professor Thompson and his ilk, the enemy is still in the East. The Serb yesterday, the Russian today, . . . and the Greek had better take notice, lest the Turk be unleashed once again. This dishonorable strain of Western tradition harkens back to the later Middle Ages, when "Byzantine" became equated with duplicity and perfidy. Gibbon extended the meaning to all of Slavic orthodoxy, while in this century Toynbee espoused the infamous "fossil thesis" which held that the Byzantine Empire, and by extension those peoples who received their formal culture from it—i.e., the rest of us honorless Orthodox Christians—were simply inferior to the West. It lacked Nordic blood, you see, so Byzantium could not effect the transition from antiquity to the Middle Ages to modernity. Besides, Byzantinism leads to autocracy, which in turn leads to communism—so it's genetic, too!

The irony is that for all this bombast about *Homo byzantinus* and his politics, the United States has become the chief practitioner of "Byzantine" politics, at home and abroad. But Thompson et al., are not content with the moral, spiritual, and demographic wasteland of what used to be Christendom. To the infinite delight of a newly resurgent Islam at our gate, they are plotting new *cordons sanitaires* against an enfeebled Russia, which can only lead to the final showdown, the completion of the suicide of our race, our culture, and our common Christian civilization, which was initiated in 1789 and began in earnest in 1914.

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

BOUNTY HUNTERS with a license to kill are glorified on television every week. The reality is uglier and more terrifying than most of us imagine. In Phoenix, a group of heavily armed bounty hunters, wearing ski-masks and body armor, sledgehammered their way through the front door of a private residence, tied up a mother, and held her and her three children at gunpoint. As the thugs broke into the room where Chris Foote and Tina Wright were sleeping, they were met with gunfire from Foote's 9 mm pistol. The invaders laid down a fusillade of rifle fire, killing the couple.

The bounty hunters were looking, so they say, for a man who had skipped out on a $25,000 bond in California. They got the wrong house. It's a simple mistake. It could happen to anyone. People in Arizona are naturally outraged, and reformers are calling for laws licensing and regulating bounty hunters. It seems virtually anyone can become a bounty hunter, even convicted felons. One of the suspects in the case, Michael Sanders, has been implicated in several robberies. In 1993, he was arrested on a weapons charge when an earlier bounty case resulted in a shooting death. He was also arrested after he invaded a home and threatened a man with a chemical spray. In that case, too, Sanders had

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picked the wrong house. Charged with criminal trespass and aggravated assault, he was never prosecuted.

What has given Michael Sanders impunity? According to the *Arizona Republic* (whose excellent reporting is the source of my information), Sanders is believed to be an informant for at least five law enforcement agencies, including the FBI and the BATF. With that kind of support, he had a right to feel cocky. Even when he made mistakes or violated the law, his friends in high places could always find someone else to take the fall.

But weeding out felons who can't read the numbers on a mailbox will not make us any safer. As usual, the reformers miss the point. Suppose the thugs had gone to the right house and killed the right man. Whatever crime he committed (police officials will only say it was nonviolent), the "jumper" was not under a death sentence. Why should anyone, bounty hunter or cop, have the right to take a citizen's house by storm, even if the citizen is dealing drugs or leading a religious cult or sawing off shotguns?

The right of a bounty hunter to break and enter homes or cross state lines without extradition papers is one of the many gifts of the Supreme Court. In an 1873 case (*Taylor* v. *Taintor*), the Court ruled that laws against illegal search and seizure do not apply to bounty hunters. Apparently, they no longer apply to the FBI or the BATF, the federal agencies allegedly served by Michael Sanders.

Conservatives, who like to think of themselves as tough on crime, have usually made fun of ACLU liberals for their obsession with criminals' rights. A key provision of the Constitution, however, was the Fourth Amendment, prohibiting illegal search and seizure. This amendment was included in the Bill of Rights because of American resentment against the British government's attempt to enforce such laws as the Stamp Act and the Cider Act. With nothing more than a general writ, officers of the crown had invaded shops and homes looking for contraband merchandise. A leading Boston patriot, Mercy Otis Warren, called for an amendment to save Americans from "the insolence of any petty revenue officer to enter our houses, search, insult, and seize at pleasure."

In the tradition of Anglo-American law, a man's home is his castle. Once upon a time, government agents could not enter without permission, except in cases of major felonies. Tax bills, library fines, speeding tickets, debts, or contraband substances (like drugs or illegal weapons) did not justify a home invasion.

A creditor had to lurk outside the house, hoping to catch the debtor unaware. He could not hire heavily armed thugs and police informants to murder him in his sleep. In those days, a home-invader was likely to get himself shot. Chris Foote, in fact, did manage to wound two of his attackers, but they were wearing body armor, and he was only shooting a 9 mm.

Foote's father said he was happy that his son tried to defend himself, commenting: "I think everyone should have a gun." He's right, of course. Everyone should own a gun, to defend his family not just from the felons who would rob and kill them but also from the DEA, FBI, and BATF agents who so often make regrettable mistakes. Chris Foote's only mistake was in owning a 9 mm. He should have had an assault rifle.

—Thomas Fleming

DIANA IS DEAD. The sudden and gruesome death of a woman in her prime, especially the mother of adolescent children, is a sad event. With Princess Diana, it has the makings of a real tragedy. She was pushed into a public marriage with an unloving and eccentric man 14 years her senior. To make matters worse, her husband was infatuated—and adulterously involved—with another woman throughout the marriage. Condemned to an unsettled life of loneliness and emotional turmoil, Diana lacked the stamina of her sturdier predecessors (notably Alexandra, Princess of Wales and later Queen of England), or that inner strength which is woven from a strong moral and spiritual fiber.

It is not for us to judge Princess Diana's private life—although in an earlier time, her adultery would have constituted treason—but in withholding comment on her flaws and her often very poor judgment, one does not have to condone the ongoing sanctification of Diana by the frenzied media pack. The hurried promotion of the "People's Princess" to sainthood is tasteless, and the presence of all the usual suspects on the bandwagon—from Nelson Mandela to Michael Jackson to Bill Clinton—makes the banality of the spectacle wellnigh terminal.

We have seen it all before, of course, and a cynic would conclude that Diana is the least flawed member of a pantheon which includes Jack Kennedy, Marilyn Monroe, John Lennon, and Elvis. But while all of the above managed to create a name for themselves in their chosen profession, Diana's only real claim to fame was in her awful marriage. Her AIDS-related work and her antilandmine crusade were fine and dandy, but we all knew the truth: it was only by becoming a princess that she became someone, and she became a princess by doing what she must have bitterly regretted doing. Without that fateful "yes" at Westminster Abbey 16 years ago, she would have remained a privileged nobody.

But instead, in the words of a British commentator, "like over-emotional teenagers who mourn the break-up of their favourite pop group, we are encouraged to suspend disbelief and join in the false community that weeps and hugs itself in the worship of an icon of victimhood." Diana's death will remain with us well into the new millennium: watch out for charity appeals, book revelations, film contracts, television retrospectives, and assorted conspiracy theories.

An eager mass market, driven by the hunger in the "global village" for an aristocracy, will gobble up the outpourings of this lucrative industry. That Diana's image will feed the hungry is simply further proof—as if any more were necessary—that the modern world is utterly lacking in aristocratic virtue.

—Srdja Trifkovic

THE RUBY RIDGE saga continues. Five years to the day after 14-year-old Samuel Weaver and United States Marshal William Degan were killed in the initial confrontation at Randy Weaver's residence, prosecutors in Boundary County, Idaho, indicted Weaver's friend Kevin Harris on charges of first-degree murder. Weaver's supporters were rightly outraged, with some claiming that the charges represent double jeopardy (Harris was cleared of similar charges at the federal level), and others pointing out that Harris deserves a medal for defending his friends against an assault by federal marshals, dressed in black, who had killed Weaver's dog and opened fire on Weaver's house without even identifying themselves. But instead of a medal, Harris could face the death penalty if convicted.

While Boundary County prosecutors

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claim to have new evidence that will show that Degan was killed while retreating (and may even have been off of Weaver's property when he was shot), the possibility of a conviction in Harris's case seems fairly slim (as the extremely low bail—$10,000—attests). Far more interesting is the decision of Boundary County prosecutor Denise Woodbury to indict FBI sharpshooter Lon Horiuchi on manslaughter charges. Horiuchi, who killed Vicki Weaver as she held her baby in her arms, has become a symbol of an arrogant federal government that refuses to hold its agents accountable. Less than a week before, the Justice Department had declined to prosecute Horiuchi or any of the FBI officials involved in drawing up the "shoot on sight" rules of engagement. That decision seems to have spurred Woodbury to action. In fact, the Boundary County indictments were handed down August 21 in order to beat Idaho's 5-year statute of limitations on manslaughter charges.

A county prosecuting a federal agent is a rare—perhaps unprecedented—event, but Woodbury's decision to go after Horiuchi could not have come at a better time. With good reason, the public perceives federal law enforcement agencies as running amok. Everyone knows about Ruby Ridge and Waco; but there are an increasing number of local and regional cases that haven't made the *New York Times* or the nightly news.

In a recent case, profiled in the Vancouver *Columbian* and the Portland *Oregonian*, 20 agents of the IRS, the FBI, and the BATF—with guns drawn—burst into the home of Jim Bell of Vancouver, Washington. The agents converged on the house in a dozen armored vehicles, confiscated Bell's computer, and told the news media he was "armed and dangerous." His crime: he had posted an essay on the Internet which discussed a libertarian-style scheme to dismantle government and to handle issues of security and justice through private means.

As the number of federal law enforcement officers increases (approximately ten percent of all law enforcement officers are federal agents) and the number of crimes that fall under federal jurisdiction rises, such cases become more common. Across the country, the DEA, the BATF, and the FBI, with or without the assistance of local authorities, all too frequently burst into private residences on the basis of incorrect or incomplete information supplied by paid informants, former business partners, or neighbors with a grudge. Federal agents occasionally issue an apology when an innocent person's home is invaded, but apologies don't repair property that has been damaged or bring back people who have been killed. As in the Ruby Ridge case, the FBI, BATF, and DEA refuse to discipline those responsible, and Janet Reno's Justice Department declines to prosecute.

The Justice Department responded to Horiuchi's indictment by saying that federal prosecutors and the prosecutors in Boundary County "enforce different criminal laws, using different legal standards." That's why this case is so important. At the state and local level, the presumption of innocence still applies to citizens, and willful misconduct by law enforcement officers is something to be punished, not rewarded. Unlike FBI Director Louis Freeh, whose main concern is that Horiuchi's "rights as a federal law enforcement officer are fully protected," Boundary County prosecutor Woodbury realizes that federal agents don't have a right to do wrong. If other local and state prosecutors follow in her footsteps and indict federal agents for misdeeds in their jurisdictions, perhaps the emerging federal police state can be stifled in its infancy.

—*Scott P. Richert*

A SOUTHERN TRADITION ended on August 19, when Beth Anne Hogan, a 17-year-old ponytailed blonde from Junction City, Oregon, signed the Virginia Military Institute's matriculation book. With help from Janet Reno's Justice Department and the U.S. Supreme Court, Miss Hogan and some 30 other young women have done to VMI what the corpulent Shannon Faulkner and her sistren did to the Citadel. Alumni from both schools are no doubt less than thrilled about the prospect of perfume and petticoats transforming the Rat Line and Hell Week into exercises in mere powder-puffery. Old Stonewall must be turning in his grave.

But there is hope for us traditionalists. Two VMI grads, Dr. Michael J. Guthrie and Stanley E. Poston, have come to the rescue with their plans to found the Southern Military Institute (SMI). SMI, according to Guthrie, will be an "overtly politically incorrect institution," emphasizing the military traditions of the Confederacy. "We intend to create an institution," Guthrie claims, "that will preserve the traditions of both Virginia Military Institute and the Citadel." According to a detailed written proposal that was made public at the annual meeting of the League of the South (formerly the Southern League) in Biloxi in June, SMI will need $100 million in order to open its doors to 1,000 cadets as an all-male, Christian institution in the year 2002. The present plan is to build SMI in the hills of northeast Alabama and to give preference in admission to young men from the South.

Not surprisingly, the naysayers are out in full chorus against Guthrie, Poston, and Thomas Moncure, Jr., an ally who quit the VMI Board of Visitors to protest the admission of women. The National Organization of Women reportedly has threatened to sue; Guthrie's hometown newspaper in Alabama, the *Huntsville Times*, ran a column highly critical of the proposal; and Dan Huntley of the *Charlotte Observer* wrote: "With more than two years to go, the prize for the worst idea of the new millennium has to be the plans for a private all-male academy that emphasizes the military traditions of the Confederacy."

Liberals and their friends are undoubtedly rankled by SMI's plan to be male, Christian, and Southern. This most politically incorrect trinity is, of course, out of step with their notions of progressive egalitarianism, which explains why, when VMI and the Citadel decided to take on the Justice Department and the Supreme Court while still accepting public funds, their fates were sealed. VMI Superintendent Josiah Bunting III tried to put the best spin he could on the emasculation of his school when he told the incoming "Rats" (no longer "Brother Rats" for obvious reasons): "VMI does not care if you are poor or rich . . . white or black, female or male, Taiwanese or Finn, or Virginian. We only care about your heart, your integrity, and your determination." But the acting Dean of Faculty, Colonel Alan Farrell, was a bit more honest in his assessment of the day: "Something precious," he lamented, "has just been ripped from us." Indeed it had, but that was the goal of the Clinton Justice Department (and the Bush Justice Department, which initiated the lawsuit) all along.

Now that VMI and the Citadel are no longer VMI and the Citadel, the time is right for the Southern Military Institute. Threats will surely be forthcoming from Miss Reno's misnamed Justice Depart-

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ment, as well as from NOW and the chorus of whiners that pollute the Republic's airwaves. But, God willing, SMI will become a reality. When it does, it may help to save the South from the clutches of a ruling elite bent on destroying the virility exemplified by Jackson, Lee, and Forrest.

(*For further information on SMI, please call Dr. Michael Guthrie at (205) 464-0830, or write him at 267 Pine Ridge Drive, Madison, AL 35758.*)

—*Michael Hill*

SLING BLADE, the recent hit film that rightly won Billy Bob Thornton an Academy Award, is now out on video. As viewers of the film know, it is a marvelous tragedy of classical simplicity. But what has not been mentioned is that it is also a tale told in the tradition of Southern literature. As the late M.E. Bradford reminded us, the protagonist in Southern literature is the *community*—not the alienated individual of modernism—and so it is in this film when a retarded man twice becomes a murderer because of his primitive decency, trying to uphold right in a society permeated with vice.

The story opens as the main character is about to be released from 25-years imprisonment in a hospital for the criminally insane. He is no longer considered a threat to society. His childhood and youth had been a horror of misuse by his family and community. His crime was killing his promiscuous mother's lover with a sling blade, and then killing his mother when he realized he had not committed an act of rescue and defense but an unwanted act of interference.

Upon returning home, he is befriended by some of the townsfolk and by a boy and his mother who have been taken in by a vicious live-in boyfriend. Tragedy ensues as the retarded man once more comes to the defense of decency in the only way he can—another murder. If you want to know any more, you'll have to rent the flick.

One hesitates to recommend any film today because the medium, like all of popular culture, even at its best, is so suffused with the general corruption of manners and morals that there is always a chance that one will lead astray a good Christian family trying courageously to shield itself from the ambient evil. But those who have wanted to exorcise all trash and filth have too often been unable to tell Shakespeare from Harold Robbins. (Prurience is only the other side of the coin of excessive prudery.) If we were to avoid all unpleasantness, we would have to excise most of the great art of the world. I do not think any young woman's morals have ever been corrupted by reading Shakespeare (or Faulkner) despite their works being replete with seduction, murder, rape, greed, incest, and every vice known to man (even bestiality in Faulkner).

My blessed grandmother was shocked when she saw me reading *Gone With the Wind*. This was about 1954 or so. Grandmother was a Southern patriot, but she thought the book glamorized immorality. In fact, most of our ancestors, the pious ones, said the same thing about novels in general. I still think they were generally right. However, it is too late. I feel the same way about rock music that grandmother felt about *Gone With the Wind*, but I could never shield my children from it entirely. And it seems to me they have corralled and tamed it, taking whatever was of any value and throwing away the rest. We cannot run away from the ambient corruption. Better to face it and master it (at the appropriate age, of course), despite the risk.

This is a roundabout way of plugging *Sling Blade*. But what Hollywood has needed, ever since D.W. Griffith fell out of favor, was some Southern storytelling talent behind the camera, and in this film it's present. Ironically, if I am reliably informed, the events upon which *Sling Blade* is based took place in Northern California. But for Hollywood and probably the mass audience to believe in a retarded murderer, he must have a Georgia accent. Lucas Black, who plays the young boy, is perfect. So is country singer Dwight Yoakum, who impersonates a villain so well that I did not even recognize him until I read the credits, even though I knew he was supposed to be in it.

This is a story about justice and decency and murder and good and evil. What more could you want? Exercise discretion with your children. Stable youngsters can probably profit from this, have their moral development enhanced. This is not Homer, Shakespeare, or Faulkner, but it is an honest attempt, in a corrupt age and medium, to address—as they did—human tragedy.

—*Clyde Wilson*

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THE 1997 INGERSOLL PRIZE recipients are **Shelby Foote** and **Jean Raspail**. At a ceremony at the Newberry Library in Chicago on November 2, Foote will receive the Richard M. Weaver Award for Scholarly Letters; Raspail, the T.S. Eliot Award for Creative Writing. The awards, each of which carries a cash prize of $20,000, recognize writers of abiding importance whose works affirm the fundamental principles of Western civilization.

Shelby Foote was born in Greenville, Mississippi, in 1916. He attended the University of North Carolina in the mid-1930's, served in the U.S. Army from 1940 to 1944, and was a captain in the Marine Corps the following year. He began publishing fiction in the 1940's and historical narratives in the 1950's. He received annual Guggenheim fellowships between 1958 and 1960, the Fletcher Pratt Award in 1964, the Dos Passos Prize for Literature in 1988, and the Nivins-Freeman Award in 1992. He has received honorary doctorates from the University of the South, Southwestern University, the University of South Carolina, Millsaps University, and the University of Notre Dame.

Though an accomplished novelist and short story writer, Foote is best known for his three-volume narrative of the Civil War (and more recently for his contribution to Ken Burns' documentary on the war). As Nash K. Burger explained in the *New York Times Book Review*, "After writing five novels, one of which, *Shiloh*, dealt with the Civil War, Mississippi-born Shelby Foote was asked by a New York publisher to write a short, one-volume history of that conflict. Foote agreed. . . . Now, 20 years later, the project is completed: Three volumes . . . 934 pages, a million and half words. . . . a remarkable achievement, prodigiously researched, vigorous, detailed, absorbing." Foote keeps "an even hand in giving North and South their due measure of praise or blame," noted C. Vann Woodward; "history and literature are rarely so thoroughly combined as here," added Peter Prescott in *Newsweek*.

Thomas Fleming, executive secretary of the Ingersoll Prizes, says Shelby Foote "is one of the master storytellers of our age. He has rescued history from the

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statisticians and made a permanent contribution to American self-understanding." As Clyde Wilson is fond of saying, "Shelby's work will never be replaced."

Novelist, journalist, filmmaker, and diplomat Jean Raspail was born in Chemillé, France, in 1925. He was educated at College Saint-Jean-de-Passey and Institution Sainte-Marie-de-Monceau in Paris, as well as the Ecole des Roches à Verneuil-sur-Avre. He is the author of *The Camp of the Saints* (1973), *Who Will Remember the People* (1986), *Septs Cavaliers* (1993), *L'Anneau du Pêchur* (1995), and two dozen other novels, histories, travelogues, and film narratives. He has been a frequent contributor to *Figaro*. He received the *grand prix du roman* from the French Academy in 1981, the *prix Chateaubriand* in 1987, the *grand prix du roman de la ville de Paris* in 1991, the *prix du roman des Maisons de la presse* in 1995, and the *prix littéraire prince Pierre de Monaco* in 1996. Elected to the Legion of Honor and of Arts and Letters, Raspail is also Director-General of the Mines of the Sarre, a former Consul-General to Patagonia, a member of the Society of French Explorers, and an avid sailor.

"Jean Raspail is an adventurer of the spirit," notes Thomas Fleming. "He has been everywhere, done everything, and yet his writing retains a youthful freshness. Each of his books comes as a surprise. He is one of the last masters of the clarity and beauty we used to expect from French prose."

The Ingersoll Foundation is the philanthropic division of the Ingersoll Milling Machine Company of Rockford, Illinois. The Rockford Institute administers the prizes. The past recipients of the T.S. Eliot Award are Richard Wilbur (1996), Zbigniew Herbert (1995), Wendell Berry (1994), Fred Chappell (1993), Muriel Spark (1992), Mario Vargas Llosa (1991), Charles Causley (1990), George Garrett (1989), Walker Percy (1988), Octavio Paz (1987), V.S. Naipaul (1986), Eugène Ionesco (1985), Anthony Powell (1984), and Jorge Luis Borges (1983). David Hackett Fischer (1996), François Furet (1995), Murray Rothbard (1994), Eugene Genovese (1993), Walter Burkert (1992), John Lukacs (1991), Forrest McDonald (1990), Edward O. Wilson (1989), Edward Shils (1988), Josef Pieper (1987), Andrew Lytle (1986), Robert Nisbet (1985), Russell Kirk (1984), and James Burnham (1983) are the previous recipients of the Richard M. Weaver Award.

Epicycles:

• Not in My Backyard: What do right-wing advocates of nuclear power and left-wing advocates of social-engineering have in common? Both accuse localists who don't want to despoil their neighborhoods of **NIMBY**—"Not in My Backyard"—syndrome. In their view of the world, local control must be sacrificed for the greater good—whether cheap, abundant energy or homeless shelters. Here in Rockford, NIMBY has reared its ugly head several times over the past few months. Most recently, citizens who have struggled to maintain one of the last decent neighborhoods in downtown Rockford have had a group home for drug addicts forced upon them. According to Rockford's weekly newspaper, the *Rock River Times*, the developer of the project lives in a small town east of Rockford. When asked by one of the residents of the neighborhood if he would live next to the group home, the developer "paused, then answered 'No.'" Apparently NIMBY cuts both ways.

• The Sun Never Sets: Criticized for appearing too distant in the wake of Princess Diana's death, the **British royal family** went out of its way to correct appearances. The Queen delivered public remarks (normally she does so only at Christmas), and she, Prince Charles, and princes William and Harry appeared outside the gates of Buckingham Palace to observe the mementos of mourning left there by British subjects. But most significant of all was the decision to fly the Union Jack at half-staff over Buckingham Palace on the day of Diana's funeral. Never in the history of the monarchy has the Queen's banner (or the King's) been replaced by the British flag. Ironically, the death of Prince Charles' ex-wife (which removed any impediment to his ascension to the throne) may ultimately signal the end of the British monarchy.

Obiter Dicta: Timothy Murphy, a poet from Fargo, North Dakota, has contributed three new poems this month as well as a short essay of his reminiscences of Robert Penn Warren. A collection of Mr. Murphy's verse, with a critical preface by Ingersoll Prize recipient Richard Wilbur, will be published next year by Story Line Press. Our other poet this month is **Geoff M. Pope**, who teaches English and creative writing at Dominion College in Seattle. He is the editor of *The Salt & The Light: A Journal of Christian Writers*.

Chronicles is illustrated this month by St. Petersburg native **Anatol Woolf**, who, in addition to freelance work, has designed sets for theaters in Russia and provided illustrations for St. Petersburg Textbook Publishers. Since coming to America in 1987, Mr. Woolf has been a frequent contributing artist to *Chronicles*, as well as to the *Washington Post*, the *Washington Times*, *Policy Review*, *National Geographic Traveler*, *Legal Times*, and *Cricket*. Mr. Woolf works with a variety of materials, from watercolors to pencil to acrylic. Further samples of his work are available on his Web page: www.netcom.com/~a.woolf/.

Chronicles is available at the following outlets in **Arizona**: Barnes & Noble Superstore, Mercado Fiesta, Mesa; Borders, Biltmore Fashion Park, Phoenix; Hastings, 940 Willow Creek Road, Phoenix; Books, Etc., 901 S. Mill Avenue, Tempe; Barnes & Noble Superstore, 7325 Lacholla Boulevard, Tucson; Bookstar, 5680 E. Broadway, Tucson; and New Crescent Smoke Shops, 216 E. Congress and 7037 E. Tanque Verde Road, Tucson. Please ask your local bookstore to carry *Chronicles*.

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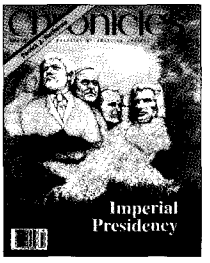

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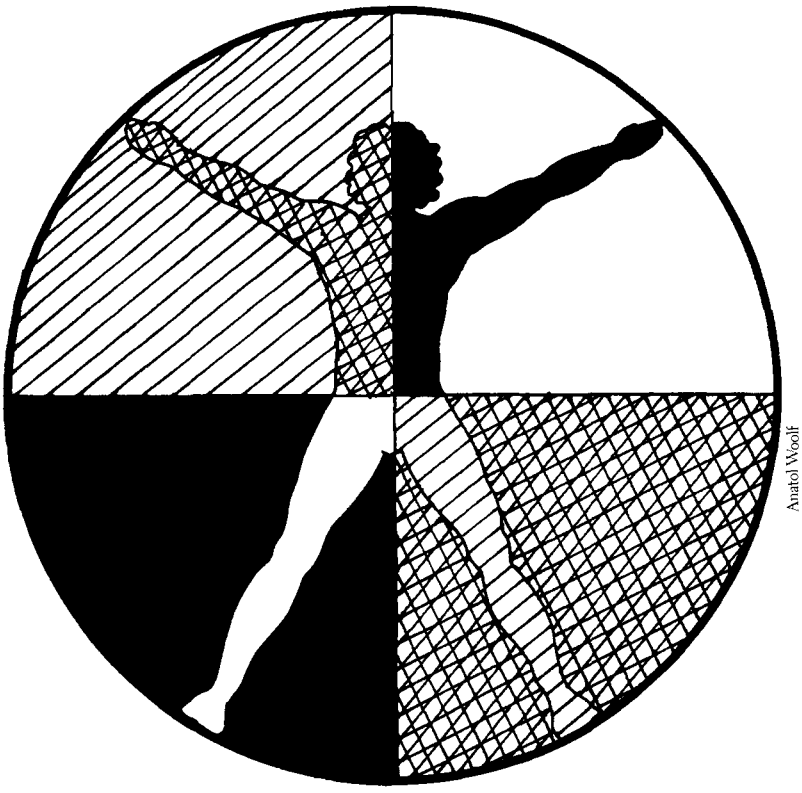

Anatol Woolf

White Like Me

by Thomas Fleming

Race is the American religion, which is why no one can talk about it truthfully. I do not mean that no one speaks his mind on the subject. Well-indoctrinated liberals can talk all day on why race does not matter, why the whole concept means nothing; and racialists can talk even longer on why it means everything, why loyalty to race transcends patriotism and friendship. For racists and antiracists alike, faith dictates facts, and atheists as well as believers take a pious pride in being fools.

I heard recently of a would-be filmmaker who had blacked his face to do the "Black Like Me" charade with his white wife. Much to his disgust, he was well-treated everywhere he went in the South; but, he insisted, he was still discriminated against. When he applied for work, "white" people with inferior résumés got the job. Try to imagine the scene. A self-righteous liberal thinks he can pass for African simply by putting Shinola on his face, and he wonders why people don't trust him enough to give him a job. He is lucky he was not thrown in jail. In a society in which all privileges belong to designated minorities, impersonation of an Eskimo or a deaf-mute is treason to the system. Mimes beware.

The filmmaker in blackface had apparently swallowed the line that race is only skin deep, as if there were not thousands of physiological and psychological characteristics defining racial groups. Skin colors—white, black, brown, yellow—are only convenient labels on a large package of distinctive traits. Anyone over the age of three used to know that race is a basic fact of life; today, there are Ph.D.'s in the social sciences who do not know this, which is particularly strange in a place and time where race matters more, perhaps, than it ever has in human history.

In this sense, the racialists are right. Race is a far more pressing concern today than it was in 1860, when people—Abolitionists included—took racial differences for granted and assumed that the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant race in America constituted the greatest nation in the history of the world. But that WASP nation was divided into North and South, East and West; and in every region there were subsections and states that claimed a man's loyalty. Few Americans were generically Protestant, unless their neighborhood was being overrun by a horde of Irish Catholic immigrants, and even Calvinists were divided into sects that reflected ethnic origin and half-forgotten theological squabbles back in Scotland or Germany.

In those days, a man's primary loyalty was to his kin, his friends, his church, and—if he had sufficiently large views—to his state. Race hardly entered into the question. Even after the devastations of war and Reconstruction, some Southern Bourbons opposed Jim Crow laws on the grounds that "decent" blacks were better company on a train than ill-behaved whites.

In the 20th century, most of these ancient loyalties were undermined and eroded by a ruling class that imported millions of aliens and then, in a panic over what to do with so many Southern and Eastern European Catholics, passed legislation restrict-

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ing the rights of all parents to bring up their children as they saw fit. They constructed a welfare state to divide the generations from each other; they did their best to destroy every vestige of regional and religious loyalty. They got rich building highways that broke up the old familiar patterns of life and spattered the children of the house across the continent; they destroyed every obstacle to their own profit and called their actions progressive and philanthropic, because, unlike Henry Ford who realized too late what the automobile had done to American life, they could not bear to confront the truth.

So here we are, 260 million well-fed savages prowling through the ruins, scavenging bits of civilization from museums and bookstores like street people browsing through garbage cans. Our great-grandparents were part of a civilization, a culture, whether the language of that culture was Sicilian or American English. They could recognize the people of their neighborhood by the tilt of the hat they wore and spot the stranger (of 50 miles away) from his mistakes in language and manners. The prayers they said at table, the cups from which they drank, the snatches of song floating through their heads as they drifted off to sleep at night—these and a million other cultural particles defined them as people of their region, their faith, their village.

We, their descendants, are more likely to identify ourselves with the brand of instant coffee we heat up in the microwave, the Seattle espresso bar chain we patronize, the label on our designer jeans. The songs that go through our heads were concocted by jingle-writers and fabricated in a studio, and if we have actually heard them performed live, we were disappointed with the quality. After Disney World, our children look upon a real jungle or an actual hometown as boring and unreal. If we are well-off, the lack of a culture does not bother us; there are so many distractions: 24-hour sports channels, virtual sex on the Internet, and if for one instant we hear the voice of conscience in our head telling us that nothing is real, there is always coke or dope or the legal tranquilizer of the month to block the chinks against the faint whispers we hear through the massive walls of mass culture.

The not-so-rich are less fortunate and have to content themselves with cheap beer and network television. Without an HMO to supply them with legal narcotics, they turn to more dangerous alternatives, like heroin and crack. If they are black or brown, they might start thinking about Donald Trump or George Bush or any other affluent white man and wonder what makes them so special (what, indeed). Some of them may even dimly realize that the welfare state that takes care of them was designed by frightened whites who wanted to keep the coloreds quiet. Despising the weakness of a white ruling class that destroys what is left of its own cultural memory and nurses its children on cultural diversity and Afrocentrism, they begin to listen to Louis Farrakhan railing against white devils who have stolen the black man's inheritance or to the Latino leaders who speak of taking revenge on Columbus, Cortez, and Sam Houston.

If, on the other hand, they are white like me, they may resent all the privileges and largesse squandered on blacks and Mexicans by rich liberals spending their money and their children's birthright. The antiwhite propaganda on television only makes them sympathetic to David Duke, and looking around for something to believe in, some place to take their stand, they can find nothing more compelling than the abstractions of white identity. If they are halfway literate, they may subscribe to one or another racialist newsletter, where they will learn all about how black and brown devils have stolen their birthright. Until a few years ago, they would also have been taught that civil rights, affirmative action, and miscegenation were all part of a plot designed by Jewish lawyers, but some of the very racialists who used to speak boldly about the "holohoax" (signing their works with zip codes, pen names, even alternating first names) and hang their hats at the Institute for Historical Review have decided to tap into Jewish racial resentments.

I once had the misfortune to find myself sitting with a neoconservative philosopher-turned-racial-theorist and with a leading holocaust revisionist. Instead of turning on each other, they attacked me for my views on Lincoln. I suppose that if they had been candid, their argument would have been that Lincoln was a progressive racist building a white nation in North America. If, in his quest for union, he destroyed both Unitarian New England and the Trinitarian South, that was of no concern to ideologues who confess to no loyalty or creed but race. At the risk of sounding like an old Bourbon (my only connection is bottled in Kentucky), I prefer the company of any African-American who loves his kids and goes to church. Politically, he may vote for antiwhite programs that discriminate against my children and drain my pocket; morally, at least, he does not turn my stomach by making a tactical alliance with his declared enemies in the Klan.

> Healthy people cannot exist without loyalty, and if there is no American nation to command their loyalties, they will turn inevitably to something else.

The great mistake made by black and white nationalists alike—the mistake that ensures their failure—is to confuse the categories of race and nation. A race is more or less a subspecies, a set of genetically determined characteristics. Even though it may be true that no pure races exist on the planet, the basic types and subtypes are still distinguishable. A nation, on the other hand, is defined by language, culture, and shared experience. A man will fight and die for a nation, "for the ashes of his fathers and the temples of his gods," but for a race, the most he will do is to subscribe to a newsletter that makes him feel less like a loser. Some national conflicts are also race wars, but a Slav defending his village against the Huns was protecting his wife and children; he was not protecting the purity of the gene pool.

At first sight, the United States in the 1990's might resemble Austria-Hungary wracked by nationalist uprisings: a polyglot empire dominated by one or two ethnic groups whose power is challenged by minorities demanding recognition. The differences, however, are more striking than the similarities. The

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most obvious difference is that there is no black nation, no Latino nation, no Indian nation. Indians and Latinos are historically more divided among themselves than they are united against the Anglos. Latinos have language and religion in common, but even setting apart the differences between Spanish and Indians, there is little to unite Cubans, Mexicans, and Puerto Ricans except their colonial past, which is why, I suppose, the legal definition of "Hispanic" continues to make sense even for those who have not a drop of the blood of the conquistadors.

Just as significant, perhaps, is the lack of a definable territory. The ethnic map of Austria-Hungary was a jumble, but each little tribe—Croats, Poles, Czechs, Hungarians, Serbs—had its own map showing the empire of the Mohocks "at its greatest extent." They still do. Although their territorial ambitions were mutually exclusive, each nation had a core homeland for which it eventually settled.

With one or two exceptions, our own racial nationalists show little interest in territory. Some Mexican militants, it is true, speak of creating the nation of Aztlan out of the Southwest, and the Nation of Islam has a utopian plan for taking over several Southern states. (Say "Hey" to Bubba for me when you get to the Delta. On second thought, maybe it would be wiser to concentrate on some state like Massachusetts where the natives are unarmed.) But these territorial dreams are not part of the political landscape. In calling themselves "Latinos," "Hispanics," and even "Native Americans," immigrants from Mexico make it clear that their so-called nationalism is only a ploy to gain influence over that great strongbox in Washington, from which all blessings flow.

Black nationalism is even less possible than Mexican nationalism, since African-Americans do not possess even the minimum essentials of a common identity. Their only shared experience is bondage, which ended over 130 years ago. The Nation of Islam is on the right track, although not in its territorial aspirations. By latching onto a sect that is historically antagonistic to European Christianity, the Black Muslims have added a religious dimension to their racial identity. However, so long as the welfare state keeps black Americans in a state of dependency, there are few incentives for accepting the military discipline imposed by Minister Farrakhan. Their best hope is a budget-cutting Republican in the White House. The election of a Ross Perot or even a Steve Forbes could cause a second civil war.

The white response to black and Latino nationalism ranges from bored indifference to the moral outrage expressed by neoconservative superpatriots whose whine of "After all I've done for you!" falls on deaf ears. Overt white nationalism is a phenomenon very much on the fringe, so long as whites remain nominally Christian (or Jewish) and dimly aware of their ethnic heritages. White racists would like to undermine both Christianity (which they regard as a stumbling block to genocide) and the national traditions that keep white peoples divided. Most of them particularly dislike Southern nationalism—which is both historic and Christian—and denounce groups like the League of the South (formerly the Southern League) for accepting black members and for opposing the creation of a great white union.

Identity politics is not simply a racket (although it is that, most definitely). The ties that bound Americans together for the past 100 years—a shared language, an Anglo-American culture, a set of common heroes, a somewhat vague religious consensus (a Protestant cake with Catholic filling and Jewish icing)—have dissolved under the invasion of immigrants into a culture already undermined and subverted by an elite class that is feminist, anti-Christian, and anti-American. Healthy people cannot exist without loyalty, and if there is no American nation to command their loyalties, they will turn inevitably to something else—to religion, to a movement, to some lesser nationalism like the South or Alaska. As Alaskans, they may come to hate the lower 48, but their primary motivation is love of their own, not hatred of the other.

Racial nationalisms, on the other hand, are all rooted in hatred. Liberals like to lump together Nazis, the KKK, and racial theorists, as if they were all part of a continuous movement aimed at maintaining white supremacy. But the original Klan was a national liberation army made up of ex-Confederates and their younger brothers who refused to accept their status as a subjugated people. Black Americans have a perfect right to hate the original Klan, but they should understand that those postwar conflicts were part of a conquered people's struggle to defend itself. It was only accidentally a struggle between races.

White racism today is something far more sinister. White people per se have no territory, no faith, no history to fight for; they are united only in their hatred of members of the enemy race who wear their label on their face. Their very hatred is the badge of their emptiness. If white Americans really do begin to think of themselves as nothing but white, they will have lost everything they have that is worth defending. c

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Orchard in Bloom

by Timothy Murphy

These seven hundred trees
pillar a pagan church,
a basilica for bees
where seraphic songbirds
promiscuously perch
to blend their melodies
in canticles whose words
the vernal believer
need never decipher.

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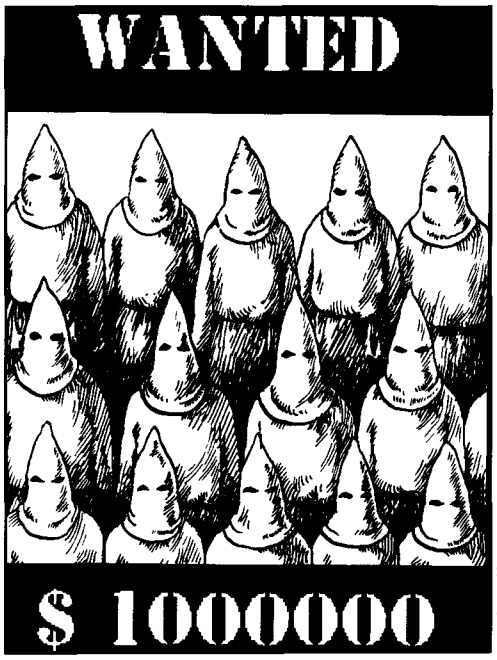
Witchfinder

The Strange Career of Morris Dees

by Samuel Francis



Anatol Woolf

The trial, conviction, and death sentence of Timothy McVeigh for the Oklahoma City bombing of April 19, 1995, passed quietly this year, far more quietly than most reporters and some political leaders wanted. The main reason for the calmness of the McVeigh proceedings was probably the utterly uninteresting mind, character, and personality of the defendant. Unlike Charles Manson, who carved swastikas in his forehead and stared satanically at the public throughout his trial, McVeigh simply stared, and no swastikas were in sight. Ever since his arrest 90 minutes after the bombing, McVeigh has said virtually nothing, and certainly nothing of any interest. Even his brief quotation, before he was sentenced to death, from a fairly obscure Supreme Court dissenting opinion by Louis Brandeis, was too cryptic to excite much curiosity, and despite the heinousness of the crime for which he was convicted, it was almost impossible to sustain any public interest in the man who perpetrated the crime.

Nevertheless, some people did find the McVeigh trial interesting, though not because of the defendant, his deed, or the legal, moral, and political issues involved in it. Almost at the beginning of McVeigh's trial last March, an organization known as the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), headquartered in Montgomery, Alabama, issued a publication that made McVeigh and his crime its centerpiece.

Entitled "Two Years After: The Patriot Movement since Oklahoma City," the publication is the latest contribution to scholarship of the SPLC, which specializes in keeping track of what it calls "hate groups." Founded by lawyer Morris Dees in 1971, the SPLC has kept up a running account of the minutiae of the far right, and its most recent delvings into the world that supposedly bred the bombing of the Murrah Building and the deaths of 168 people within it are fairly typical of its products.

The thesis of "Two Years After" is that the extreme right—including white racialist groups, tax protesters, Christian Identity churches, anti-gun-control activists, Confederate flag defenders, conspiracy theorists, and the "antigovernment insurgency"—is deeply involved in further plotting to carry out acts of terrorism similar to the Oklahoma City operation. The publication, like most of what is produced by the SPLC, makes no distinctions among the various groups, individuals, and causes that it "exposes," and in at least some cases it has managed to loop in some perfectly ordinary and law-abiding conservative organizations.

"Two Years After" enumerates no fewer than 858 distinct organizations in the United States that are said to be part of the "Patriot Movement," a term that is never precisely defined or distinguished from Klan groups, white separatist groups like the Aryan Nations, neo-Nazi groups like the National Alliance, or groups like the various "citizens' militias" that have sprouted in recent years. It offers a listing of the 858 "Patriot" groups, though without describing the size, nature, beliefs, or activities of any of them. In some cases, even the listing is meaningless,

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as with the entries under Ohio: "Unknown Group Name, Grove City" and "A Concerned Citizen, unspecified location." Groups like the "Aryan Republican Army" (also "unspecified location") are lumped in with the "Keystone Second Amendment Foundation" (yet another "unspecified location"). Whether as a research guide to the far right or as a directory of which groups not to invite to cosponsor your local community barbecue, "Two Years After" is worthless.

Some of the groups, locations specified or not, that the publication lists may actually exist; some might even have more than two or three members; and a few might actually be dangerous. But according to the publication, which reproduces photographs of the bombed Murrah Building throughout the text, all of them are part of the vast and sinister "Patriot Movement," whose goals were succinctly characterized by the SPLC in a media briefing for "Two Years After" on March 4, 1997: "The Patriot Movement poses a continued danger to the country, including the threat of biochemical weapons." Though repeated again in the text, this claim is never substantiated, although a few pages later we learn that "The United States faces an increasing threat of biochemical terrorism—possibly from elements in the Patriot Movement—that would result in massive death and destruction. Patriot publications are filled with stories about an impending biological or chemical attack on U.S. citizens by the federal government." This fear of the *federal* use of biochemical terrorism against Americans is interpreted by the SPLC to mean that the "Patriots" are planning to use such techniques themselves.

Not only are many of the extravagant and sensational claims of the publication never substantiated, but also a false unity is attributed to the "Patriot" movement. Ideological as well as behavioral distinctions among different groups are ignored, the actions of individuals are ascribed to the "movement" as a whole, and organizations that are entirely law-abiding and essentially mainstream are lumped in with fragments of the Klan and neo-Nazis. This is what has happened to conservative activist groups such as the U.S. Taxpayers Party and the Council of Conservative Citizens, which have been portrayed as part of the bomb-throwing "Patriot Movement." In the list of the 858 Patriot organizations throughout the country, local and state chapters of the USTP and the CCC, as well as of the John Birch Society, are included, with no differentiation among them, or between them and the more extreme fringe groups. The USTP, founded by movement conservative Howard Phillips, is a political party that seeks repeal of the income tax, abolition of abortion, control of immigration, withdrawal from the United Nations, and a restoration of constitutional government. The CCC, mainly a Southern-based organization of grassroots conservative activists but with chapters throughout the nation, is a hard-line conservative but hardly extreme group. Both the USTP and the CCC tend to be Buchananite in their orientation, both are entirely law-abiding, and neither has ever been accused by any responsible source of harboring any sympathy for political violence or engaging in it. The same is true of the John Birch Society. One may agree or disagree with their versions of conservatism and their political views, but to place them in the same category as Timothy McVeigh or the National Alliance is clearly irresponsible.

Yet this style of scholarship is not untypical of the SPLC's products, and the man behind the Center, Morris Dees, enjoys a long track record of similar distortions, as well as some amazingly high financial returns from it. In 1988, the *Progressive*, hardly a magazine of the far right, reported that Dees was raking in some $5 million a year, "about twice as much as [the SPLC] manages to spend," and *USA Today* reported in 1996 that the SPLC is "the nation's richest civil rights organization" with assets of $68 million. In 1993, the American Institute of Philanthropy ranked the SPLC as the fourth least-needy charity in the country. "We're interested in much more than poverty," Dees told the *Progressive*, and his Center has the bank account to prove it.

> Yet whatever the value of Morris Dees' scholarship and whatever motivates him to sponsor it, he continues to bamboozle much of the media.

Originally a direct-mail fundraiser by profession, Dees sold his marketing firm in 1967 for a tidy $6-7 million and then headed for the big time in civil rights. With partner Joe Levin, he set up the SPLC in 1971, won the support of black Georgia civil rights activist Julian Bond, and embarked on the lucrative crusade in which he has been enlisted ever since. He raised funds for George McGovern in 1972 and made use of the McGovern mailing list afterwards. In 1975, he raised money for the defense of black convict Joan Little, accused of stabbing a jail guard in North Carolina, and an anti-death penalty project in Georgia with lawyer Millard Farmer. The two men quarreled over money, and Dees wound up settling with Farmer for about $500,000. "I was naive at first," Farmer told the *Progressive*. "I thought he was sincere. I thought the Southern Poverty Law Center raised money to do good for poor people, not simply to accumulate wealth."

Farmer's characterization of the SPLC is not unique among Dees' former associates (Dees says of Farmer, "He's a fool"), but the former marketing wizard was now launched on a new career. He was soon raising funds for Jimmy Carter, though Carter wasn't far out enough for Dees, who says, "You can't fire them up with a middle-of-the-road cause or candidate. You've got to have someone who can arouse people." If Carter wasn't useful for harvesting the cabbage, however, Ted Kennedy and Gary Hart were better, and Dees raised funds for both of them in the 1980's.

But it was still bush league. It wasn't until Dees discovered the Ku Klux Klan and the far right that he really started munching in the high-dollar pastures. In 1980, Dees founded a research institute and newsletter called *Klanwatch*, which kept an eye on the Klan and related (and not a few unrelated) political groups. Even some of his own associates argued that the Klan, at that time with a national membership of less than 10,000, wasn't worth the trouble, but Dees understood where the money was buried. "The money poured in," reported Randall Williams, the original director of *Klanwatch*, who, like so many of Dees' other associates, departed in disgruntlement. "We developed a whole new donor base, anchored by wealthy Jewish

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contributors on the East and West Coasts, and they gave big bucks." But Dees soon found that if you start watching the Klan, the Klan might start watching back. In 1983, Klansmen firebombed the Center's offices in Montgomery, an attack that helped bring in even bigger bucks.

By 1994, Dees was reported to be hauling in a personal salary of $136,000 a year, but even liberals who supported his causes were starting to wonder. In the same year they began to notice that, for all his fulminations against "white racism," Dees' Center employed no black attorneys and that only one of its eight department managers was black. The *Montgomery Advertiser* reported that since the Center's opening in 1971 it had hired 14 lawyers, only two of whom were black, and both left the organization unhappy. One of the former black lawyers, Christine Lee, a Harvard Law School alumna who interned at the Center in 1989, told the *Birmingham News* in 1994, "I would definitely say that there was not a single black employee with whom I spoke who was happy to be working there." Dennis Sweet, also a former black staff attorney for the Center, said, "overall blacks were treated in a patronizing manner" at the offices. Others reported hearing racial slurs and epithets used there.

Richard Cohen, the SPLC's legal director, responded to such claims by saying that the Center did indeed have two black directors on its board and that 14 percent of its legal staff has been black. Dees himself was perhaps less eager to placate those who were suggesting that the czar of antiracism was himself less than egalitarian. "We don't have black slots and white slots," Dees told the *Birmingham News*. "Probably the most discriminated people in America today are white men when it comes to jobs because there are more of those who had more education opportunities and who the test scores show are scoring better and on paper look more qualified. That's why you have so many reverse discrimination cases around."

But even aside from his own views of blacks, Dees remains a controversial figure even on the left. Not only has Millard Farmer challenged his good faith, along with former employees who insinuate racial bias, but so have civil rights workers in other organizations. "He's a fraud who has milked a lot of very wonderful, well-intentioned people," Stephen Bright told *USA Today* in 1996. "If it's got headlines, Morris is there." In 1994, Dees was instrumental in establishing a $700,000 Civil Rights Memorial outside his offices in Montgomery, but when civil rights veteran Ralph Abernathy showed up at the dedication ceremonies, Dees seized him by the arm, told him he wasn't welcome, and ordered him to get off his property. Abernathy's autobiography, which recounted the irregular sexual life of Martin Luther King, Jr., had excited controversy among civil rights supporters, and Dees released a statement afterward saying that Abernathy's attempt to put himself on the stage at the dedication ceremonies was "a ploy . . . a cheap effort to bring himself back into the fold of the civil rights community after selling out its most honored hero."

Whatever the truth about the authenticity of his commitment to racial equality, there is no doubt that Morris Dees has made himself more than a nuisance to white racialists of the extreme right. In 1987, he sued the United Klans of America on behalf of a black lynching victim and won $7 million in damages. The *Montgomery Advertiser* series on Dees reported that only $52,000 of the money won actually went to the mother of the Klan's victim; the rest wound up in the Center's bank accounts. His legal actions against white racialist Tom Metzger in 1990 virtually ruined Metzger and put his White Aryan Resistance out of business by winning $12.5 million in damages, and Dees has launched similar lawsuits against other activists. The late Robert Matthews, the neo-Nazi who founded the secret terrorist group called "The Order" in the 1980's and who carried out the murder of Colorado radio host Alan Berg and the armed robberies of several armored cars, reportedly placed Dees' name next on the hit list after Berg's; Matthews, who was killed in a gunfight with federal agents in 1984, wanted to kidnap Dees and skin him alive—a sentiment that may be shared, for different reasons, by some of Dees' former employees and business associates.

But there's no doubt also that Dees' "research" is of questionable value. Not only does he seem to specialize in scare sagas like the ones told in "Two Years After," but he is often just plain wrong. Last year during the black church burning hysteria, Dees' *Klanwatch* listed five acts of arson against black churches in Kentucky in 1990, but it never mentioned that the supposedly "white racist" fires were in fact set by a black man.

Dees was one of the first to make capital out of the supposed rash of church burnings. At a news conference in Washington in April 1996, Dees announced that "Those [black] churches that have been burned in the South were certainly burned by racists." In fact, as subsequent investigations by the Associated Press, *USA Today*, and other mainstream newspapers showed, there was no wave of church arsons at black churches by white racists. The AP reported that "A review of six years of federal, state and local data by the Associated Press found that arsons are up—at both black and white churches—but with only random links to racism. Insurance industry officials say this year's toll is within the range of what they would normally expect."

Fewer than 20 of the 73 fires at black churches that the AP counted since 1995 can be blamed on "racism." Five states have suffered more fires at white churches than at black churches, and in only 12 to 18 fires is there any evidence of racial motivations. In nine fires at black churches, black suspects have been named, while in six other church burnings, white churches were also targets of the arsonists. *USA Today* found that 64 black churches in Southern states had been burned since January 1, 1995. Of these, eight were torched by black suspects and one by a racially harmonious trio of two whites and one black. Only three cases involved whites who might have had racial motives. In Morris Dees' own state of Alabama, the state Fire Marshal investigated all 15 fires at black churches in his state since 1990 and found no evidence of racial motives in any of them. Earlier this year a federal task force appointed by President Clinton to investigate the church burnings concluded that white racists were responsible for such acts of arson in "only a handful of cases."

Yet whatever the value of Morris Dees' scholarship and whatever motivates him to sponsor it, he continues to bamboozle much of the media. Reporters eager for a sensational story can always rely on the friendly experts at the SPLC to feed them uncorroborated details about the numberless white legions lurking in the cow pastures and munching sandwiches down at their klavern meetings, all the while plotting more "biochemical terrorism," more church burnings, and more bombings of federal buildings. One who fell for the "Two Years After" tale was Abe Rosenthal of the *New York Times*, who, in a column of June 20, 1997, titled "The Traitor Movement," swallowed the whole whale. Rosenthal regurgitated the "Two Years After" account almost verbatim, including the "858 groups" operating

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in "every state." Rosenthal used the SPLC propaganda to call for federal legal measures against the "hate groups," "militias," and the "Patriot Movement" as a whole.

Even the federal government pays a lot of attention to Morris Dees, though not perhaps in the way it should. The Special Operations School Catalog of the U.S. Air Force for 1997 lists a course entitled "Dynamics of International Terrorism," taught at the classified level of "Secret." One of the guest lecturers in the course was Joe Roy, the current editor of *Klanwatch*. What exactly Mr. Roy instructed the flyboys on is not clear, but the course did include a section on the terrorist "Threat in the United States," and since *Klanwatch* and the SPLC confine their researches on terrorism and extremism to these shores, it is likely that is what Mr. Roy lectured about.

And that, for all his apparent flaws both personal and professional, is Morris Dees' real use. As Randall Williams, the original director of *Klanwatch*, told the *Progressive* in 1988, "We were sharing information with the FBI, the police, undercover agents. Instead of defending clients and victims, we were more of a super snoop outfit, an arm of law enforcement." Outfits like that run by Dees can carry out intelligence-gathering operations on law-abiding targets that government intelligence and law enforcement agencies do not have the funds, the time, the brains, or the *authority* to investigate; they can keep and disseminate the information they gather and develop it (or embroider it) in any way they please, and they can then convey that information (or disinformation) to government investigators and to students in government-sponsored seminars, leading them to believe in the existence of a far-reaching and dangerously violent underground of right-wingers that must be stopped before it kills again.

Dees' own conception of the threat, which he unbosomed on National Public Radio's Diane Rehm Show this spring, makes clear what the real target of his crusade is: "Fear of immigrants; fear that the government has grown too large, over-regulation, over-taxes, is insensitive to people; fear of the English language not being the mother language of the country—in other words, multiculturalism, fear of giving gay people more rights; fear of the laws that allow abortions." In Dees' mind, and in the minds of those on the left and in the federal leviathan who listen to him and share his authoritarian and paranoid phobia of anyone who dissents from their agenda, those who share and act on these "fears" to try to stop immigration, halt abortions, end multiculturalism, promote economic liberty, and reduce taxes, even if they do so peacefully and democratically, are no less a danger than Timothy McVeigh and the fictional terrorists of *The Turner Diaries*. As the new federal police state continues to evolve, men like Morris Dees and his associates can expect to serve as its demonologists-in-chief and head witchfinders, and to enjoy a bright and prosperous future advising, informing, and shaping the reign of terror that they want to unleash against the dissidents of the right.

Rich in the Kitchen

by Geoff M. Pope

Pianoing the counters
Bongoing the stove
Trumpeting the cupboards
Claps in the cooking cove

Dancing by the dishwasher
Singing into the sink
Laying hands on every drawer
This doesn't mean *Don't think*

Laughing past the dishrag
Hugging the Frigidaire
Humble as a grocery bag
Secure as silverware

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A Ghost Awakens

American Indian Nationalism

by Gregory McNamee

In the closing years of the 19th century, Indians throughout the American West began to dance. Dervish-like, they danced for hours and days on end, in the belief that their ecstasy would call forth the gods, bring back the dead, and banish the conquering Europeans from North America. A Paiute elder named Captain Dick explained to a white observer just how this was to take place:

> All Indians must dance, everywhere, keep on dancing. Pretty soon in the next spring Big Man come. He bring back game of every kind. Game be thick everywhere. All dead Indians come back and live again. They all be strong, be young again. Old blind Indians see again and get young and have fine time. When the Old Man comes this way, then all the Indians go to the mountains, high up away from the whites. Whites can't hurt the Indians then. Then while Indians way up high, big flood comes like water and all white people die, get drowned. After that water go away and then nobody but Indians [and] everywhere game. Then medicine-man tell Indians to send word to all Indians to keep up dancing and the good time will come.

Thus assured, they danced, Paiute and Sioux, Cheyenne and Zuni, Jicarilla and Washo, hoping to work magic and bring back that good time. Although it promised cataclysm, the dance itself offered no violence. Even so, the American government took a dim view of the dancer's efforts. The War Department dispatched columns of troops to put down the Ghost Dance, as it had come to be called, wherever it showed itself. Thousands of Indians died in this decade-long campaign of suppression, notably at a South Dakota center of the insurrection with the resonant name of Wounded Knee.

Today, at millennium's end, in places across the West like Wounded Knee and Pyramid Lake, Ganado and Lodge Grass, talk of a new Ghost Dance fills the air. Native prophecies now making the rounds hold that the next two years will bring the return of the White Buffalo and an apocalyptic end to the white invaders, who will be driven into the Eastern sea. (They will be helped into the ocean, say seers who add a bit of Nostradamus to the mix, by a Chinese nuclear strike.) All the Indians have to do, according to the prophecy, is wait, watch, and dance.

This is strange and unsettling talk, and it has found many willing ears in the Indian nations. Outside of those nations, it is a well-kept secret—not so much because it is withheld from whites, but because it is not publicized to the outside world in the way of almost everything that happens in Indian country. The dancers are gathering, and thus far they have not been impeded by agents of the federal government, although you can be sure that the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Bureau of Indian Affairs are taking note of who comes.

One has to travel into Indian country to hear about the Ghost Dance, or, failing that, to turn to Laguna Pueblo writer Leslie Silko's sprawling 1991 novel *Almanac of the Dead*, an episodic tale of the Native American retaking of conquered homelands, to catch bits and pieces of how the new apocalypse is meant to unfold. Had this talk been aired a quarter of a century ago, all of America would have heard about these latter-day Ghost Dance prophecies. But today the mainstream media accords little attention to Native American issues, even those

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with the occult edge American audiences seem so hungry for. And on the other side of the line that divides Indian country from what anthropologists call the dominant culture, no organized propaganda-making force exists to bring those issues before the larger public and, in this instance, to warn Anglo society that the end is nigh. The reason is simple: the pan-Indian nationalist movement, so much a part of the countercultural newsmaking machine in the late 1960's and early to mid-70's, has disintegrated and very nearly disappeared as a result of external pressures (like the FBI's COINTELPRO operation) and the internal dissension and the splintering tendency common to dissident movements everywhere.

American Indian radical-nationalist politics first drew international attention in the early winter of 1969, when an unknown number of activists, certainly fewer than a hundred, occupied Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay. The American Indian Movement (AIM), an activist organization previously confined to Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, grew to prominence through that action, bringing fame (or notoriety) to Richard Oakes, Russell Means, Dennis Banks, Browning Pipestem, and John Trudell, among other leaders. It also helped focus Indian activists on developing what movement strategist Clyde Warrior called "true Indian philosophy geared to modern times." That promise was never fulfilled, largely because AIM's adherents could never quite figure out just what constituted that true Indian philosophy, apart from a vehement dislike for the federal government and for the traditional tribal leaders in places like Pine Ridge and Wounded Knee who, in the activists' eyes, had sold out to the conquerors.

In their fine book *Like a Hurricane*, Native American historians Paul Chaat Smith and Robert Allen Warrior chart AIM's fortunes through the three years culminating in both Richard Nixon's reelection and the infamous siege at Wounded Knee, where armed AIM members and sympathizers held off federal agents and soldiers for eight weeks, becoming an international cause in the process. The period between Alcatraz and Wounded Knee, the authors write, "was for American Indians every bit as significant as the counterculture was for young whites, or the civil rights movement for blacks." Significant though it may have been, it had a far smaller impact on the larger world; AIM's young, untested leadership was simply unprepared to take their struggle into the arena of reasoned discourse and away from the cameras.

Smith and Warrior make their case with admirable balance, noting that the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs, usually the heavy in books of this sort, was full of well-meaning and sympathetic individuals, and that AIM had its share of bad actors, including people who at Alcatraz busied themselves "bootlegging liquor and thrashing residents who criticized the leadership or who asked too many questions about finances." Still, the authors argue, most of the activists who put themselves on the line at Alcatraz, Wounded Knee, and elsewhere gave powerful voice to the voiceless peoples hitherto tucked away on reservations, "the most ignored population in the United States."

The glory days were few and short. As quickly as Indian radicalism had exploded on the national stage, it faded, disintegrating under the weight of its own internal contradictions and divisions and from the relentless legal assault by federal and state governments. According to radical Indian scholar Ward Churchill, this "relentless legal assault involved the FBI's filing 300,000 charges against AIM members, 140 against leader Russell Means alone; the onslaught was unprecedented, and it has not since been repeated." Given the internationally favorable publicity accorded them, however, AIM might have been able to withstand the FBI's campaign—which, subsequent hearings showed, also involved infiltration by agents provocateurs and harassment, at Pine Ridge, by members of the GOONS ("Guardians of the Oglala Nation"), who are believed to have killed 342 AIM members between 1973 and 1976.

> Given the absence of any other national political organization run by and for Native Americans, many observers believe that—at least for the moment—pan-Indian nationalism is a dead cause.

But AIM broke apart because of its own internal divisions, which came into sharp relief early on. One instance, as Smith and Warrior note, was Alcatraz, where competing factions sought to seize leadership of the organization. (Means, now a sometime actor in Disney movies, was one of the winners in this struggle.) Another was the misguided seizure in 1972 of the Bureau of Indian Affairs headquarters in Washington, which happened accidentally: AIM participants in a civil rights march on the Capitol simply had nowhere else to stay, and they occupied the federal building to escape the weather. In the authors' words, "what happened was not a political conspiracy but a logistics meltdown," hardly the stuff of a grand revolution.

AIM lingers, but it is a shadow of its former self, its energies largely devoted to a campaign to free former leader Leonard Peltier, who is now serving a life sentence in Leavenworth Federal Penitentiary for his role in the 1975 murder of two FBI agents at the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. As Fergus Bordewich, the sympathetic author of *Killing the White Man's Indian*, remarks, the present pan-Indian nationalist movement is crippled by "ethnic chauvinism, [an] instinct to confuse isolation with independence, and a chronic habit of interpreting present-day reality through the warping lens of the past." Such damning words have made his book highly unpopular in some circles, yet Bordewich is not unsympathetic, and he sees much hope for a revitalized Native America that will someday determine its own destiny, if only its leadership will attend to endemic problems like gambling, alcoholism, suicide, and poverty, and address the federal government's inability to determine how Indian nations fit within the United States.

A politically revitalized Indian America will very likely have to turn elsewhere than AIM for its leadership; AIM appears to enjoy little support outside a few college campuses, and certainly it cannot claim to represent a majority of constituents on

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any reservation. Given the absence of any other national political organization run by and for Native Americans, many observers believe that—at least for the moment—pan-Indian nationalism is a dead cause. They may be right; certainly the struggles now taking place among Indian nations themselves suggest that larger alliances are unlikely, as Navajos contend with Hopis over land and grazing rights, as Sioux and Crows recapitulate centuries-old enmities over territorial claims, as Klamaths and Yuroks contest fishing grounds. But small signs like the new Ghost Dance suggest that such a movement, whether led by AIM or not, is only dormant. All that is required for it to awaken is the emergence of a common threat or two.

One possible catalyst is a scientific controversy that, like the Ghost Dance, has received little public attention. In July 1996, two hikers discovered the remains of what appeared to be a white male in a gravel bed along the Columbia River outside of Kennewick, Washington, on land administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Forensic scientists judged the well-preserved skeleton to be 9,300 years old, and archaeologists interested in the peopling of the New World set about revising the prehistoric record to accommodate the controversial notion that Caucasoids may have crossed over from Eurasia at the same time as, or perhaps even earlier than, the descendants of today's Indians, who, the theory goes, made their way over the Bering land bridge from northeastern Asia during the last Ice Age.

The scientists were stymied, however, by the leaders of the Umatilla Indian Nation, under whose tribal jurisdiction the skeleton's provenience fell. Invoking the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990, which allows Indian tribes to claim the remains of their ancestors, the Umatilla demanded the immediate surrender of the Kennewick skeleton. The scientists argued that they had much work yet to do in conducting tests that would better identify the genetic heritage of Kennewick Man. And, they argued, the tentatively dated remains far predated the Umatilla people, meaning that the Umatilla should have no jurisdiction over the skeleton. They sued to stop the repatriation, and last June the U.S. Federal District Court in Portland agreed with their argument, ordering the Corps of Engineers not to release the skeleton to the Umatilla. The Umatilla are now appealing the decision, and the matter will almost certainly go all the way to the Supreme Court—which will, archaeologists hope, order a redefinition of the act to limit the access of tribes to aboriginal artifacts that predate their cultures.

What does this scientific controversy have to do with the larger issue of pan-Indian nationalism? Only this: in introducing the startling possibility that today's Indians may not be descended from America's first settlers, the scientists may, however unwittingly, open a new debate over Native Americans' moral claim to the ownership of the New World. The facts of the matter are far more complicated, as the scientists are quick to point out. "Caucasoid," for instance, does not mean "Caucasian," but as Douglas Preston explains in a recent article in the *New Yorker*, there is already talk about the emergence of pan-Indian opposition to the scientists' findings, opposition that may take on a we-were-here-first sloganeering around which an AIM-like group could profitably form.

Native American opposition is in fact forming around recent congressional attempts to tax tribal commercial enterprises following the introduction of highly profitable legal gambling on reservations throughout the country. This new, fantastically rich revenue stream caught the attention of two U.S. representatives, Asa Hutchinson (R-AK) and Gerald Solomon (R-NY), who separately introduced legislation to tax such tribal income by as much as 35 percent—a huge hit in the age of welfare reform. Neither bill cleared the House Ways and Means Committee, and neither would likely have survived a constitutional hearing, inasmuch as the Supreme Court and the Internal Revenue Service alike have repeatedly ruled that American Indian tribes are not taxable entities; in the same spirit, the federal government does not tax state revenues from lotteries or gaming. Still, Native American activists with whom I have spoken fear that some form of the Hutchinson-Solomon bills will eventually be passed into law—in which instance national Indian resistance is likely to be spirited.

"As soon as they wake up and recognize the fact that the U.S. government doesn't respect them as sovereign, Indian people will get down to what the real issues are," says University of Arizona law professor Robert Williams. He is certainly right. The real issues are not skeletons, but laws; not death, but taxes; not ancient insults, but modern troubles. The pan-Indian nationalist movement may well only be sleeping. If something rouses it, its Ghost Dance will be heard everywhere. c

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The Blind

by Timothy Murphy

Gunners a decade dead
wing through my father's mind
as he limps out to the blind
bundled against the wind.

By some ancestral code
fathers and sons don't break,
we each carry a load
of which we cannot speak.

Here we commit our dead
to the unyielding land
where broken windmills creak
and stricken ganders cry.

Father, the dog and I
are learning how to die
with our feet stuck in the muck
and our eyes trained on the sky.

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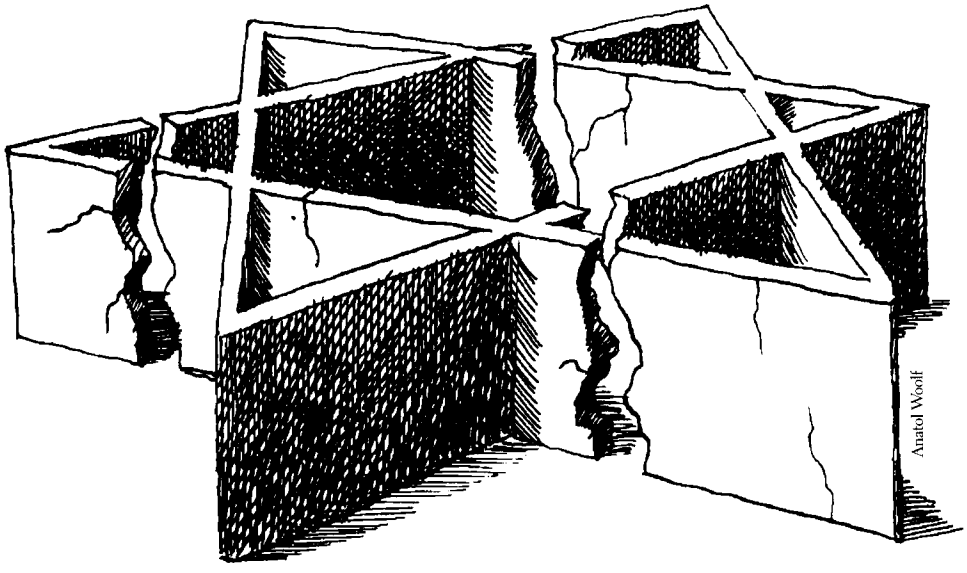
Jews Without Judaism

by Jacob Neusner



Certainly no confusion of the ethnic with the religious presents more anomalies than the mixture of ethnic Jewishness and religious Judaism that American Jews have concocted for themselves. But the brew is fresh, not vintaged. For nearly the entire history of the Jews, to be a Jew meant to practice the religion set forth in the Torah revealed by God to Moses at Sinai, which the world knows as Judaism. A Jew who gave up Judaism adopted some other religion and ceased to identify himself with the Jews as a group. So the religion, Judaism, defined the group at both the entry and the exit points.

For the entire history of Judaism and for most of the history of the Jews, the definition of the Jewish group invoked purely theological categories. In that religion the Jews are called "Israel," meaning the Israel of which Scriptures speak, the holy social entity ("people," "nation") that God called into being through the saints, beginning with Abraham and Sarah. Belonging to Israel imposes divine requirements: a belief in the one God who created Heaven and Earth and made himself known to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, then to Moses at Sinai and to prophets thereafter; and commandments that define the holy way of life that marks Israel as God's people. So "Israel" in Judaism corresponds to the socioreligious entity Christianity calls the "Church" or the "mystical body of Christ."

In the context of faith, therefore, "Israel" not only *does not* correspond to the state of Israel or to the Holy Land but it also has no relationship to "the Jewish People," "the Jewish community," or to any of the other secular formulations that define what it means to be a Jew today and to belong to the Jewish ethnic group. Above all, no imperative attaches itself to the continuation of the Jewish people, and "Jewish survival" bears no urgency in its own terms. None of the Ten Commandments maintains that God regards as an end in itself the maintenance of the Jews as a distinct social entity.

To illustrate the distinction between the Israel of the Torah and the various secular and cultural definitions of who constitutes a Jew and the Jewish people is easy: until the 17th-century philosopher of Jewish origin, Benedict Spinoza, there is no single instance of a Jew giving up Judaism (the religion of the Torah) and remaining Jewish—adopting no other religion, affiliating with no other social entity; that is, from Abraham to Spinoza, to be Israel meant to practice Judaism, and, more to the point, to cease to practice Judaism marked the end of belonging to Israel. (If for Spinoza, one *could* be a Jew without practicing Judaism, he did not indicate how long secular Jewishness might persist.) This is why historians point to Spinoza as the first secular or "modern" Jew.

But until the middle of the 19th century, Spinoza remained a singular figure. And everyone knew he had been excommunicated! So it was taken as the norm that someone who ceased to practice Judaism also abandoned the Jewish group and presumably entered some other religion and its community. When, in the aftermath of the Enlightenment, Jews thought they were gaining entry into the civil society of Western civilization in Germany, France, Britain, and the United States, some, continuing to see themselves as Israelites in the religious meaning of the word, reformed Judaism to fit the new circumstance; others reaffirmed the received meaning of Israel as a people dwelling apart, in God's eternal presence. The latter

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framed what they eventually called Orthodox Judaism, integrationist politically but separate religiously in the many aspects of culture subject to the Torah's commandments. A few remained Jewish without practicing Judaism (yielding the counterpart to religious Judaism in secular Jewishness). But a great many opted out. They are represented by Felix Mendelssohn's father, Karl Marx's father, and Disraeli's father, among the many Jews who purchased Christianity as their ticket to Western civilization. In other words, they adopted the Christianity that ruled in the country of their citizenship (just as, after the massacres of World War II, numerous Jews cut off all ties not only to Judaism but to the Jewish group). So until nearly the 20th century, to be a Jew meant to practice Judaism, and to cease to practice Judaism meant to stop being a Jew. If Spinoza really was the first secular Jew, it took a long time to produce a second.

Only toward the end of the 19th century did large numbers of European Jews drop Judaism but remain Jewish. Many of these lived in the ethnic mosaics of Central and Eastern Europe where large populations of diverse tradition lived side-by-side but interacted as foreigners. To be a Jew meant to speak Yiddish, to dress in Jewish clothing, to make a living in callings deemed distinctly Jewish, and, above all, to define the world in a way particular to the Jewish group. To be a Pole or Ukrainian or a Latvian or a Rumanian or a Hungarian bore the same social meanings. In a given city, natives might speak several languages, depending on origin, and points of encounter outside the circle of faith and culture were severely circumscribed. As far to the west as Britain, people took for granted that one could be English or Jewish by birth or marriage, but not both. In the United States today we should call such a definition of culture ethnic tribalization, but in Canada ethnicity as a medium of social differentiation is publicly subsidized.

It was in that context that Jews who lost the faith sought a secular definition of who is a Jew and what is "Jewishness." A Pole of the Jewish persuasion, or an authentic German of the Mosaic persuasion, so far as other Poles or Germans were concerned, was no more plausible than a flying cow. Nor did Jews themselves believe it, though in Germany, France, Britain, and the Unites States, many tried. That left the secular option, Jewishness. In response to the antireligious propaganda of the Enlightenment and the militant secularism of socialism, communism, and some formulations of liberalism, large numbers of Jews exercised that option.

For some, the Jewish group would be recast as "a people, one people," which should, and ultimately did, attain a political definition for itself as a nation; specifically, Zionists thought up and realized the state of Israel. For others, the Jews would form a language-community, with Yiddish and renewed Hebrew competing to define matters. For Jewish socialists (as distinct from Jews who left the Jewish world and became socialists or communists), the Jews would form a division in the united army of the international workers of the world; these formed Yiddish-speaking unions of enormous influence. Zionism and the Jewish Works Union, or Bund, took shape in the same year, 1897, and in Eastern Europe the latter became, after the religion, Judaism, the single most influential form of "being Jewish." And for some few in Europe, but a great many a century later in the United States, the Jewish group would form a cultural entity, redefining their religious practices into cultural forms, turning commandments of God into customs and ceremonies.

American Jews for the first 200 of their 350 years of history in the United States took for granted that their principal institutional form would be the synagogue, and that they were Jewish by reason of practicing Judaism. As their communities took shape in colonial times, these Jews constructed synagogues, cemeteries, and schools. They had no ordained rabbis for those same 200 years (the first rabbinical schools were founded in the final quarter of the 19th century), but educated lay people managed well enough. When a large migration of German Jews in the mid-19th century redefined the demography of American Jewry, the immigrants affirmed that they formed a religious group and built synagogues, reshaping the faith to accommodate the requirements of American society. En masse, they opted for Reform Judaism, which they assumed would be the Judaism of America. History proved them right—today approximately 90 percent of those Jews who belong to synagogues identify with Reform Temples or Conservative synagogues.

The mass migrations from Russian and German and Austro-Hungarian Poland, White Russia, Ukraine, Rumania, Hungary, and other parts of Central and Eastern Europe from 1880 through 1920 changed the face of American Jewry. Far more numerous than the existing community, the immigrants were also remarkably diverse. They included not only practicing Jews but atheists, Zionists and Socialists and Zionist-Socialists, Hebraists and Yiddishists, and a great many other sorts of Jews then flourishing in the heartland of Eastern Europe. There, all of the ambiguities and complexities of the modern identity-crisis affecting Jewry found their avatars, from the pure piety of the faithful—whether in Hasidic circles around a holy man or in *yeshivas* poring over the Talmud—to the utter, militant atheism of the Jewish socialists and communists. Some were highly educated in their faith or articulate in their atheism, but most practiced a residual, cultural piety, taking for granted that to be a Jew meant to practice Judaism but bearing only a light burden of religious knowledge to lend sense to religious practice.

The immigrants created a native American Judaism that defined itself as a religious group with social commitments, no different from the Mormons or the Catholics. They very quickly extended the definition to encompass ethnicity *without* religion, *despite* religion, and *alongside* religion. But no one imagined Jewish ethnicity as a purely individual and private attitude; everyone took for granted that the Jews formed a social entity, a group, differing only on what that group should make of itself. Now the characteristic form of American Jewry, the synagogue, competed with a variety of other institutional arrangements designed to Americanize the immigrants. Jewish-organized unions in various industries, needle trades for instance, espoused a socialism that defined public discourse and that was far more aggressive and articulate than the barely literate Judaic theology of the immigrants. An intellectually mature and highly educated Orthodox Judaism developed very slowly, its principal institutions, *yeshivas* for instance, rare and weak, its synagogues small and lacking stability, its rabbis poorly treated. Only after World War II, with a large-scale immigration of European survivors of the holocaust from Central and Eastern Europe, did Orthodoxy renew itself. Then the issue of accommodating American society gave way to other concerns altogether, and several Orthodox Judaisms, some Hasidic, some centered in the great academic societies of the *yeshiva* tradition, all of them segregationist to the core, competed with the

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integrationist and accommodationist Orthodoxy that had begun a generation earlier in the United States, and a generation before that in Germany and Britain.

When we contemplate the contemporary condition of Jews as an ethnic group and Judaism as a religious tradition, we confront a remarkable fact: the advent, for the first time, of Jews who identify themselves as Jewish in ethnicity. To find those Jews, and there are many, we have to take account of the entire population of Jews in the United States, half of whom do not belong to synagogues and who—if they practice any Judaism—do so in ways other than those defined as normative by organized Judaisms. To state matters simply: one, a person may belong to no institution of a Jewish character but define being ethnically Jewish as a matter of personal identity alone; it is how he feels. Two, a person may belong to a synagogue or actively participate in a religious institution of another sort, such as a *yeshiva*, where the focus is on learning but where prayers are said, and define being Jewish as belonging to holy Israel, God's first love, the kingdom of priests and holy people of whom Scripture speaks; it is how he lives the holy life. Three, a person may belong to an institution of a Jewish character that is not religious and define being ethnically Jewish as a matter of both personal *and* public identification; it is how he votes and determines with whom he associates for secular sorts of activities.

This differentiation into ideal types obscures the everyday fact that about half of American Jews fall into both the second and the third categories. The reason is that most of the same people who sustain the community in its secular formulations also belong to synagogues. In the United States, ethnic Jews may take active roles in Zionist organizations such as Hadassah, in Jewish community philanthropies called Federations or Welfare Funds, in political organizations such as the American Jewish Congress, or in service organizations such as B'nai B'rith, and may also belong to synagogues. When it comes to public activity, they practice secular Jewishness, invoking the twin symbols, the holocaust and the state of Israel, to explain their identification as participants in the American commonwealth. When it comes to private activity in home and family, to rites of passage (birth/circumcision, puberty/bar mitzvah, marriage/huppah, and death), to certain religious rites celebrated in the home and family, they practice classical Judaism, whether in its normative or reform formulations. The duality may be expressed by saying these Jews wish to be Jewish in public, in a political way, and Judaic in private, at home and in family in a religious manner.

So much for the Jews as a community. What about the other half—those who belong in one category only? A very small number of Jews, mainly in segregationist Orthodoxy, define themselves in wholly Judaic-religious terms, living out their lives in *yeshiva*-study and synagogue worship; a much smaller number belong to Reform Temples and define being Jewish in equally limited, narrowly religious terms. In the nearly complete ethnicization of Reform Judaism, these classical reformers are swallowed up: they identify not with secular-Jewish but only religious-Judaic institutions.

But the rest—about half of the Jews who live in the United States—define themselves in singularly ethnic terms. For them, "being Jewish" is a matter of who they are and what they are—it is something of which they are proud—but it carries no requirement to participate in public life as part of a community. Here Spinoza's model governs: the radically isolated individual of Jewish origin and Jewish predilections and proclivities, however these may be defined, even down to a style of joke-telling. Secular Jewishness defines traits deemed ethnically characteristic, even innate. Feelings and personal preferences take over, as secular Jews elevate the importance of having the "correct" feelings. In place of faith, history, and covenantal loyalty, they invoke personal opinion, memory, and ephemera of attitudes and political sympathies, certain that the right opinion, the correct collective memory, and the accepted attitude will suffice to make this person Jewish, that one not.

More to the point, secular Jews outside the framework of community suppose themselves smart, witty, and focused. In the hands of enemies, Jewishness finds its definition in such counterpart traits as clever, nihilistic and cynical, and aggressive. Both sides appeal to what we may dismiss as either racism or cultural determinism, depending on whether we opt for the explanation of traits by reason of nature or nurture. It hardly matters. When it comes to the privatization of secular Jewishness, we enter a world without rationality, racist or cultural. Like Hermann Goering, who said *he* would decide who was a Jew, secular Jews decide what "being Jewish" means to the ultimate "me." Once the individual decides to be Jewish on his own, then idiosyncratic interpretation takes over, and all larger public meanings fail.

Hal B. Levine's recent study of New Zealanders of mixed parentage, with one Jewish parent, is instructive here, considering that one out of every two American Jews marries an unconverted Gentile. Whom did Levine interview? There is Kevin, son of a Jewish mother and a Gentile father. Of his mother's Jewishness: "His mother distanced herself religiously and culturally; she was Jewish 'in her way.' He identifies her sense of humor and the fact that she knew Yiddish as evidence of this. He does not deny being Jewish himself, saying that he feels 'internally Jewish' and is not preoccupied with external definitions." Those Levine interviewed emphasized "the voluntary and psychological nature of identification: you can choose, based on how you feel." All this is private, rarely even familial, let alone communal. Perhaps Tara stands for the lot of them. She has a Jewish father and a Maori mother: "Tara is proud to have Jewish relatives. . . . She attributes certain aspects of her expressive nature to her Jewish background, which she knows aren't Maori and certainly aren't European." Here, then, is the other secular Jewishness: residual, individual, and trivial. Few of Levine's subjects contemplated a Jewish generation beyond themselves.

In the context of radical privatization of secular Jewishness, half-Jews, quarter-Jews, whole Jews, children of a Jewish mother but a Gentile father (thus part of Israel as defined by Judaism), children of a Jewish father but a Gentile mother (part of Israel as defined by Reform and Reconstructionist Judaism but not according to Orthodox and Conservative Judaism)—all of these varieties produce a vast spectrum of choices. Approximately a quarter of a million American Jews practice a religion other than Judaism, whether an Eastern religion (many members of the Unification Church are Jews), or Christianity in one or another of the evangelical definitions framed by "Jews for Jesus," "Messianic Jews," and the like. Here ethnicity loses all meaning, and "Jew" and "Jewish" stand for whatever someone wishes them to mean. In this setting many fear for the future of "the Jewish People."

Even now the debate over what to do next rages. One side, represented by militant secular activists, wishes American Jews

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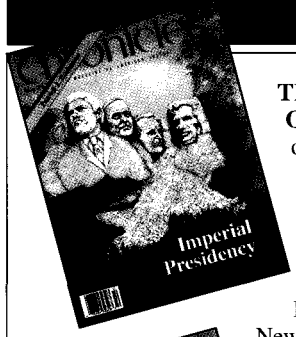
once and for all to abandon any claim to religiosity and deny a privilege, within Jewry, to Judaism. Philanthropists devote tens of millions of dollars to sustain the secular option. Secularists wish to define themselves wholly as an ethnic group: "no rules, just right," "have it your way," and other current slogans serve to define matters. The other side points to a return to the religion, Judaism, as the guarantor of the Jewish future. These positions are currently represented, respectively, by Alan M. Dershowitz in *The Vanishing American Jew: In Search of Jewish Identity for the Next Century*, written in response to his son's marriage to a Gentile, and Elliott Abrams' *Faith or Fear: How Jews Can Survive in a Christian America*, which insists that the Jews will die out if their religion is marginalized. Neither book has any bearing on the religion, Judaism, in which Israel forms a generative category but defines no end in itself. But the reason Dershowitz and Abrams fail is not theological but, appropriately, sociological: for the half or more of American Jews who practice "being Jewish" outside of the organized Jewish community and the synagogue, the two positions share the single trait of monumental irrelevance.

Nor does the Torah have any stake in the outcome of this debate. For we should look in vain in the Torah, encompassing not only Scripture but the entire oral tradition, for anyone who would concur that the purpose of the Torah (a.k.a. Judaism) is to secure the continuity of the Jews as a group ("the Jewish People"). Nothing happened to Spinoza's model after him. For outside of the synagogue and its enduring life in the service of the One God, and absent militant anti-Semitism, no secular model—Jewishness without Judaism—has ever served to sustain a diaspora Jewish group for much longer than a generation and a half. And in the nation-state of Israel, issues are drawn still more sharply. But that is another story. ◁C▷

GREAT TOPICS, GREAT ISSUES



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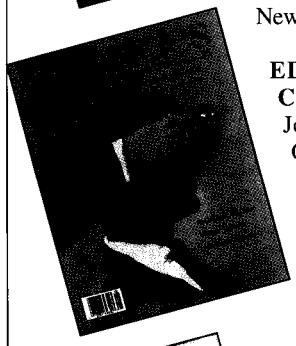

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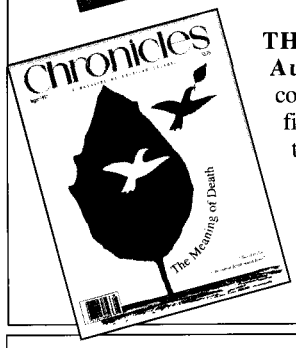

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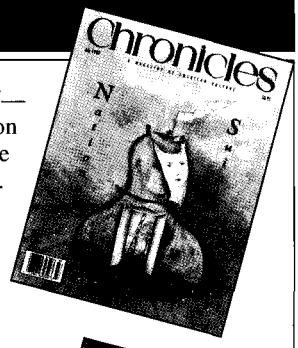

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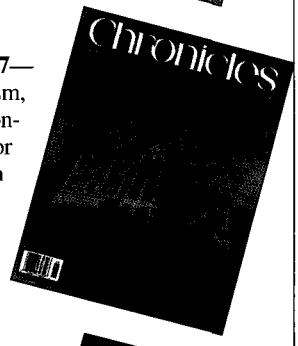

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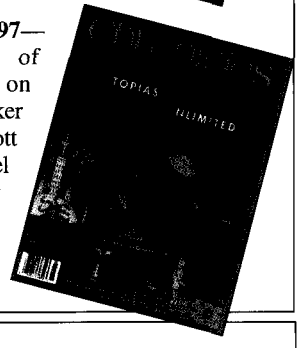

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The Habit of Making

by Loxley F. Nichols

"Nature I loved, and next to nature, art."
—W.S. Landor

Robert Penn Warren: A Biography
by Joseph Blotner
New York: Random House;
544 pp., $35.00

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In October 1986, I heard Robert Penn Warren read a selection of his poems at an LSU conference marking the 50th anniversary of the *Southern Review*. He was 81 years old, exceeding frail, and suffering from cancer. About halfway through the reading, his wispy bark of a voice failed and James Olney had to finish for him. Despite his fragile state, one could not help but feel the power of Warren's presence—even at some distance from the small figure, and even smaller voice, on stage. In addition to an aura of intellect and imagination exceeding mere fame, presence was reinforced by tenacity of will (he was obviously too ill to be there in the first place) and by the graciousness with which he greeted admirers afterward. His wife finally stepped in to rescue him.

Dogged determination characterized Warren throughout his life; precedent to rapid decline in his last years, he also possessed unbounded energy and iron-clad discipline. Born in 1905 in Guthrie, Tennessee, Warren grew up an omnivorous reader and precocious student whose aptitude and interests included not only literature but science and history, military history especially. When his plans to attend the Naval Academy were spoiled by a fluke accident that cost him sight in his left eye, Warren ended up at Vanderbilt where he immediately fell in with a group of avant-garde intellectuals known as the Fugitives. He was then 16. By 18, he was a full-fledged member of this literary elite. It was at Vanderbilt that Warren met Allen Tate, John Crowe Ransom, Donald Davidson, Andrew Lytle, and Cleanth Brooks. Warren's college years were tumultuous. Depression brought on by physical and emotional exhaustion from study, carousing, and his unrequited love for a Nashville socialite culminated in an awkward attempt at suicide. Nevertheless, it was during this time that Warren discovered T.S. Eliot, and he and his fellow Fugitives embarked on a path that revolutionized the approach to literary analysis and the teaching of literature in the classroom—what came to be known as the New Criticism.

Upon graduating from Vanderbilt with highest honors and multiple awards, Warren attended Berkeley, a period he described as his "sojourn among the barbarians" (modernism having yet to reach the West Coast). Since Warren's life in California was fully as turbulent as his Nashville existence, it is perhaps not coincidental that during this time he met the volatile Cinina Brescia, who became his first wife. From Berkeley, Warren went to study at Yale, and then as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford. After Oxford, Warren, now married, went on to teach at several Southern schools—first at Southwestern College

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in Memphis, next at Vanderbilt (where he hoped to settle permanently), and finally at LSU, where, with Cleanth Brooks, he helped found the *Southern Review*. Warren's association with Brooks turned into a long-term collaboration that resulted in the classic texts *Understanding Poetry*, *Understanding Fiction*, and *Understanding American Literature*.

Cleanth Brooks once referred to Warren writing textbooks as "Pegasus at the plow." While his contributions to classroom instruction as a professor and as an innovator are considerable, Warren's writing life began and ended with poetry. He placed his first poem at 16 and by his mid-20's was publishing poetry, fiction, biography, and essays. His last two poems appeared in the *New Yorker* in 1985, four years before his death.

Although Robert Penn Warren's life was punctuated by "crisis" (a word Mr. Blotner finds useful), even in the direst of circumstances he continued to write, voluminously—through the escalating hardships of his first marriage and the persistent professional and financial difficulties that culminated in what he painfully regarded as his "exile from the South." With the advent of World War II, LSU shifted its support from the arts and literature to a greater investment in athletics. The transfer of funding from the *Southern Review* to an enlarged budget for the team mascot, Mike the Bengal Tiger, was a bitter betrayal Warren never forgot. In consideration of both his salary and his dignity, he accepted a teaching position at the University of Minnesota.

The year 1947 brought a kind of vindication for Warren when he received not only a Guggenheim Fellowship but also the first of two Pulitzer Prizes for his single most enduring achievement, *All the King's Men*. (His second came in 1979 for a volume of poems, *Now and Then*.) Two years later he resigned his position at Minnesota and went to Yale to teach, the move cast coinciding with a long overdue divorce from the now uncontrollable Cinina. But just as the publication of *All the King's Men* had marked a change in his professional and financial fortunes, Warren's second marriage—at age 47—signaled a dramatic turning point in his personal life. Eleanor Clark, a writer herself, gave Warren the children he had long wanted, while offering a degree of domestic tranquillity, companionship, and love he had not hitherto enjoyed. Warren delighted in travel, especially enjoying long sojourns abroad, but the Connecticut and Vermont homes he acquired with his second wife remained constants, as did his allegiance to the region of his birth.

While Warren spent most of his adult life in the North and elsewhere, he never considered himself anything but a Southerner, and he had the accent, courtliness, and dispositions of thought to prove it. Blotner's account of Warren reading *Uncle Remus* in Italy to his godchild, the daughter of R.W.B. Lewis, is a small but revealing detail. Similarly, his love of recitation is distinctly Southern. One of the most memorable scenes in the book describes long summer afternoons in which Warren, his father, and various Vanderbilt friends (including Tate, Lytle, and Ransom) recited and read aloud poems on the lawn under the trees at the Warren home in Guthrie. As Ransom read Thomas Hardy's "Wessex Heights," Warren experienced an "absolute moment of transfiguration and vision" that altered him for life. Later, as an Oxford student visiting friends in Paris, Warren was heard reciting verse as he fell asleep at night and again in the morning, beginning his recitation where he had left off the night before. Many years afterward, on a trip to Mexico City, he recalled waking at 3:00 A.M. to the murmured drone of his sleeping father, now an old man, reciting "The Burial of Sir John Moore" in the next bed. It can be argued that Warren's love of (and belief in) memorization eventually caused him to fall out of favor at Yale, where he taught for a number of years. His habit of beginning a course by asking each member of the class to recite a poem or give the plot of a story drew greater and greater silences as the years passed, but he never yielded to fashion. The South lay deep in him, and even in old age his wife's epithet of exasperation for him was "You old Agrarian!" Shortly before his 75th birthday he remarked, "I love [the South]. My house in the North is really just a big hotel to me. A place I stay. The South will always be my home."

The Agrarians, a group comprised mostly of Vanderbilt Fugitives, had rejected New South industrialization in favor of the rural values of the Old South. Though Warren returned from Oxford with an altered perspective that evolved by degrees into a full-fledged support for integration, the "separate-but-equal" stance of "The Briar Patch" (his contribution to *I'll Take My Stand*) earned him the label of "racist." Writing about the race issue at various junctures in his life, Warren remained sensitive to the particular complexities of the racial dilemma in the South. Ultimately, he said, his region was best positioned to set a moral example for the entire country.

In "To the One-Eyed Poets," X.J. Kennedy writes:

> Creeley, Penn Warren, and
> James Seay,
> Did sight hold sway, and mind,
> The likes of you might well
> be kings
> In this country of the blind.

Naturally, vision and the visual were of primary concern to Warren, who loved to read and write, draw and paint. After the accident that left him one-eyed, sight became at times an obsession. Warren continued to have problems with the blind eye, which eventually had to be removed altogether, and there was always worry that he would lose sight in his other eye as well. Described as a "yearner," Warren was a spiritual man, but not a religious one. Growing up in a household that eschewed formal religion, his religious temperament never overcame a stubborn skepticism. Ultimately, he sought consolation in the physical—especially the visual—beauty of the world around him.

The central theme of *Robert Penn Warren: A Biography* is gargantuanism. Warren was a prodigious intellectual and vigorous athlete who astounds with the sheer quantity of his achievement. By the time he was 14, he had read the Bible three times. As an undergraduate, he memorized 3,000 lines of poetry to fulfill an assignment requiring 800. As an adult, he used to swim so far out in the ocean as to alarm spectators on the beach. Such physical and intellectual pyrotechnics were habitual with him. Throughout his career, Warren would have multiple projects going simultaneously—poems, a novel or biography, and often critical or pedagogical articles or books. In addition to drawing and painting, he also loved gardening and woodworking.

"Red" Warren was part of an entire culture based on volume. Gregarious as well as intellectual, his generation of writers loved socializing. They not only

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read and wrote a lot (one Fugitive, Merrill Moore, wrote 50,000 sonnets in his lifetime!), but talked a lot, smoked a lot, drank a lot, and, when not brought together for parties or extended visits, corresponded by letter often and at length. In letters that connected a wide circle of friends over a span of years (sometimes a lifetime), they discussed books, explored ideas, critiqued each other's work, and gossiped—with incalculable benefits to Joseph Blotner, as the biographer himself acknowledges.

Owing to colorful anecdotes that produce an animated picture of a precocious youth, Robert Penn Warren's early life makes for more enjoyable reading than his later years. Later chapters of Blotner's biography occasionally meld into lists of books, awards, and itineraries. The reader senses the accuracy of Allen Tate's assessment that Warren was somewhat tainted by commercial success: in the years following *All the King's Men*, he focused increasingly on the volume of his publications. In fact, he seems to have lived almost in a fervor of publishing excitement. While his accomplishments are staggering, his range broad and his penetration deep, he was not generally concise in his writing, nor careful in his editing.

Though heavy in detail, Blotner's *Robert Penn Warren* is lacking in long views. The facts by themselves are impressive, but because Mr. Blotner makes little effort to sift and weigh the evidence, a sense of perspective is missing from his book. With the exception of a bizarre (and unsubstantiated) suggestion of homosexual attraction in Warren's early friendship with Allen Tate, Mr. Blotner generally refrains from excessive psychologizing. Thus, while this biography is not as revealing or analytical as it might have been, it does offer a thorough chronicle of a prodigious craftsman's busy life. Rosanna Warren once recalled helping her father make a table: "It seemed emblematic to me of what he gave us—the sense of making." Indeed, Robert Penn Warren lived a life that dramatically embodies, as well as illustrates, this continuous "sense of making." ◦c

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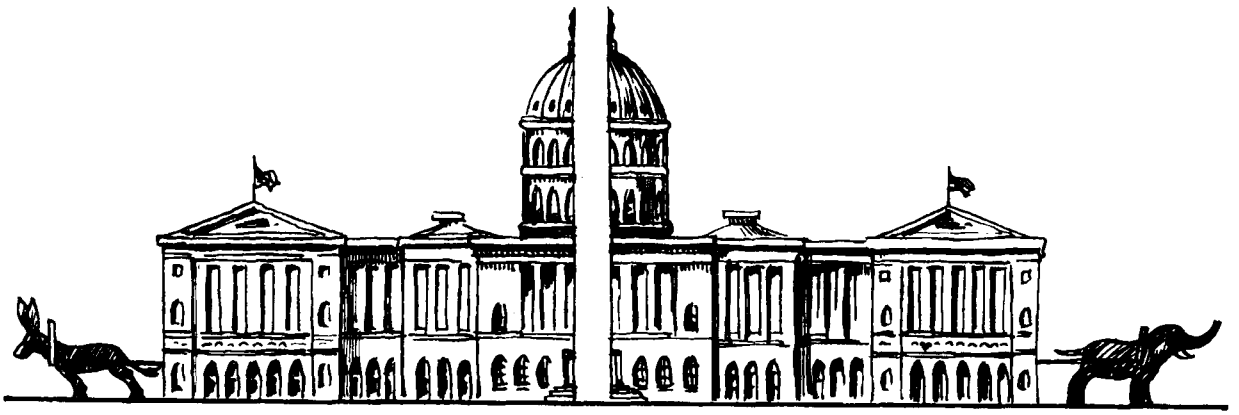
The Rump Right

by Paul Gottfried

"A perfect democracy is the most shameless thing in the world."
—Edmund Burke



Anatol Wolf

Conservatism: An Anthology of Social and Political Thought from David Hume to the Present
by Jerry Z. Muller
Princeton: Princeton University Press; 464 pp., $59.50

Lexikon des Konservatismus
edited by Caspar von Schrenck-Notzing
Graz: Leopold Stocker Verlag

Le Radici dell'Ordine Americano: La tradizione europea nei valori del Nuovo Mondo
by Russell Kirk
edited by Marco Respinti
Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori Editori

Planetarische Politik nach dem Kalten Krieg
by Panajotis Kondylis
Berlin: Akademie Verlag

◆

For some time now it has been the opinion of European political theorists that right and left have become antiquated points of reference. Allegedly, these terms, archaic by the time of the Cold War, were kept in use to distinguish the pro- and anticommunist sides—friends and enemies of the United States and Soviet Union. The same labels were given further lease on life by socialists and capitalists and, later, by social democrats and democratic capitalists seeking to demarcate their overlapping camps. In a frank recognition of this overlap, "conservative" and "liberal" are made complimentary terms, each referring to a moderate position on the political spectrum. These are the positions of nonextremists, as opposed to rightists and leftists, who scornfully reject consensus politics.

Such talk of consensus fits with the "end of ideology" interpretation of contemporary political life, which has been periodically reprised for almost 40 years: from the mainstream liberalism of the 50's culminating in the book by S.M. Lipset and Daniel Bell in 1962 to recent pronouncements on the "end of history." In this view, ideologies have been "exhausted," or overtaken by historical progress. By now, we are led to believe, everyone but fools and idiots agrees on the same political principles—chiefly human rights, a mixed economy, and evolving constitutional government. What is left to be resolved are mere details, like the size of the payroll deduction or the best mix of state economic control and the free market. This supposed avoidance of ideology, as the late Christopher Lasch was wont to observe, is itself ideological. It is a form of intolerance that demonizes those who ask unseemly questions or appeal to "exhausted" worldviews.

But equally intriguing have been the attempts to make sharp doctrinal distinctions where none exists—and where none is even intended to be present. Why should American Democrats pretend to be the party of Jefferson and Jackson, or English Tories the aficionados of Disraeli and Salisbury, when their present character and programs are unrelated to the circumstances of past centuries? One possible answer is that political parties desire to be part of a continuum, even a contrived one, rather than to be viewed as something wholly contemporary: even innovators invoke a tradition of innovation. Another, perhaps more relevant answer is that, by tracing the present differences between largely indistinguishable parties and factions to some noteworthy split safely in the past, it is possible for partisans to participate in high drama without being disruptive. To take sides in electoral contests is to engage imaginatively in political reenactment—politics presented as virtual reality.

In Jerry Z. Muller's account of conservatism since the 18th century, one finds an ideology that closely fits this description. Muller's conservatism is expansive enough to include Edmund Burke,

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David Hume, and the 18th-century jurist and depicter of Osnabruck communal life Justus Möser, together with neoconservative celebrities Edward Banfield, Irving Kristol, and Peter Berger. If this seems like forced association, it does testify to the search by some American conservatives for a convenient, but not quite authentic, past. A look at the real past, as Muller must know, would reveal the seachange undergone by American conservatism since mid-century, from an anti-welfare state and isolationist persuasion to a globalist cause committed to what the *Wall Street Journal* now calls "welfare-state capitalism."

The neoconservative guardians of this creed do not hide their feelings regarding what it is they have replaced: every several months, *Commentary* runs a pointed piece attacking the anti-New Deal and even the postwar right as a source and conduit of nativist bigotry. It is difficult for those who are essentially Cold War liberals to create a "rightist" genealogy for themselves with which they can feel at home. One might wonder whether this group—with which Muller strongly identifies—would wish to be linked, however distantly, to Catholic restorationists, or to appear in the same anthology with the hated Carl Schmitt. Muller does keep his book free of references to the postwar right and to its latter-day paleo representatives. But if the anthology ignores such obvious figures as Russell Kirk and T.S. Eliot, Muller does inflict on his friends the far more reactionary company of dead Europeans.

A more worthwhile survey of conservative thinkers and thought is a lexicon organized by the Bavarian nobleman and publisher of *Criticón*, Caspar von Schrenck-Notzing. The lexicon avoids the anachronism of throwing together antimodernists with hypermodern democratic capitalists. Schrenck-Notzing plainly does not share Muller's confidence that "the historical utilitarianism at the heart of conservatism" permits conservatives to scuttle what has sunk into "political irrelevance." The traditional right, for Schrenck-Notzing, embraces primarily critics of the French Revolution and defenders of agrarian, hierarchical societies and established churches. While this right can be seen as stretching far enough into the 19th century to take in middle-class enemies of social leveling, Schrenck-Notzing nonetheless distinguishes between liberal opposition to democratizing forces and an older, presumably purer, right.

He would also have methodological reservations about Muller's statement that "by the late 19th century conservatives had turned to a defense of elites based upon achievement and performance." From a 19th-century perspective, the elites in question were not conservative but liberal. Schrenck-Notzing's work also contains far fewer entries for the United States than for Western and Central Europe, and its survey of American conservatism since the 50's raises the conceptual problem of whether the phenomenon being examined is conservative in any historical sense.

Disciples of Russell Kirk, mostly Catholic traditionalists, have defined conservatism as a defense of "transcendental values." These values are thought to be embodied in, among others, Anglo-American exemplars of political and moral virtues; in *The Conservative Mind* (1953), Kirk provides a survey of conservative figures deserving emulation, from Edmund Burke to T.S. Eliot. While Kirk does not insist that Anglo-American history and culture have consistently yielded "conservative minds," behind his rhetoric is a perfectly defensible argument: that, contrary to a once-dominant view that "liberalism is the only American tradition," there is in American life a strong conservative tradition carried over from Europe. Despite the fact that what he associates with this tradition is often a conservative variant on Victorian liberalism, as typified by Fitzjames Stephen, Kirk is right about the resistance to democratic equality mounted by theorists on both sides of the Atlantic. He also points to the practice among early American jurists and politicians of making extended references to the Bible, William Blackstone, and Greek and Roman classics. The world in which these men lived was part of a chain extending back to "Athens, Jerusalem, and Rome": this is the teaching that Kirk hoped to illustrate when he wrote *The Roots of American Order*, intended as a high school text and now translated for the first time into Italian.

Because Kirk distrusted abstract reasoning and equated conservative sentiment with intuition and homespun truth, it is hard to trace to him directly the preoccupation with values typical of his followers. One link was Kirk's midlife conversion to Catholicism, which facilitated his identification with the Catholic Natural Law tradition. Though Kirk did not offer demonstrations of that tradition in his work, he did praise Thomistic moral reasoning as a way of learning about the good. It is, however, still a stretch from there to the habitual values talk of his disciples—particularly in view of Kirk's dismissal of values as a newfangled, individualist notion. Moreover, a cynic might ask whether the invocation by Kirkians of timeless values and "permanent things" (a phrase borrowed from Eliot) begs the question of what exactly all of them share as beliefs. Despite this repetition of certain vague terms, Kirk's disciples have displayed considerable humanistic learning and critical energy. Among their intellectual contributions have been the literary criticism of *Modern Age*'s editor George Panichas, the aesthetic and political studies of Swedish philosopher Claes Ryn, Bruce Frohnen's incisive critique of the moral emptiness of the American right (*Virtue and the Promise of American Conservatism*), Peter J. Stanlis's works on Edmund Burke and Natural Law, and Marco Respinti's elegant translation of, and introduction to, Kirk's *Roots*. Among scholars who have acknowledged conceptual debts to, and expressed personal affection for, Kirk have been sociologist Robert Nisbet, historians Christopher Lasch and Eugene Genovese, and anthropologist Grace Goodell.

Despite this well-deserved chorus of enthusiasts, Kirk's traditionalism, Greek historian Panajotis Kondylis observes, suffered from the lack of a continuing context. Kirk himself, preferring to imagine the opposite, once compared President Eisenhower to Count Metternich and himself to Metternich's advisor Friedrich Gentz. During the Reagan years he again sounded restorationist themes, to no avail. Conservatives of the 80's, grouped in think tanks near Capitol Hill, were turning out not Burkean oratory but "policies" and GOP electoral strategies. Interest in cultural and aesthetic questions had diminished on the authorized right—while, if necessary, such questions could be addressed in one of the multitude of glossy neoconservative magazines which graced newsstands inside the Beltway. Of the 30 million or more dollars annually earmarked for "conservative" foundations, almost all of it is now spent on ephemeral policy issues.

In his book *Konservativismus* (1987),

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Kondylis asks whether Kirk and other American traditionalists are not merely echoing European restorationist thought "as a counterweight to the most recent developments in a consumer mass democracy." What renders this intended counterweight useless is its detachment from any supportive sociopolitical structure. Without such a framework, Kondylis contends, values cannot be turned into a public ethic. By creatively blending Marx and Schmitt, and by giving to both his own spin, he explains why the terms "conservative" and "liberal" cannot operate as worldviews. Ideologies are distillations of beliefs put forth by political and social elites, whether rising or falling, and they carry historical weight to whatever extent their bearers can control the lives of others. Once removed from this relation, they do not prevail—certainly not as individually chosen values formerly associated with a fallen elite.

It may be said that Kondylis preaches historical relativism, and that, like other relativists, he excepts his own "scientific" values from the judgments applied to the objects of his study. Whether that is the case or not, his observations deserve to be heeded. Ideas become part of the political conversation when they appeal to those who exercise, or effectively contend for, power. Kondylis is speaking specifically about principles and social visions whose bearers seek to implement them as public truths. For this to happen, these truths must dovetail with the concerns and interests of those who can lead. As Kondylis makes clear, he is analyzing not the ontological status of "timeless beliefs" but the conditions in which some *political* ideas win out in relation to others. Kondylis does not deny that failed ideas may hang around for a time before losing all cultural impact. When in the late 80's Russell Kirk lectured on traditionalist themes at the Heritage Foundation, an institution proclaiming its devotion to a "world democratic revolution," Heritage's president Edwin Feulner was allowing representation to what he knew was a weakened position on the transformed American right. Kondylis might have described this as providing a semblance of continuity between "a neomedieval rendition of the *societas civilis*" and consumer-democratic boosterism. Needless to say, these two ingredients in the movement conservative ragout are not equally perceptible.

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Kondylis is skeptical of the claim that political conflicts will cease to occur in a consumer society, where traditional identities are diluted and in which an impersonal government hands out general entitlements. Here, too, Schmitt's essence of the political, as the drawing of friend-enemy distinctions, will continue to operate. A desperate middle class in some situations may turn to authoritarian solutions to forestall an ominous leap into radical egalitarian politics. But Kondylis relegates this "modern rightist" possibility almost exclusively to Latin junta-prone societies or their equivalent elsewhere. He does not see it as anything likely to occur in the consumer mass democracies to which he devotes his most recent book, and also his frequent columns in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. In the *Planetarische Politik nach dem Kalten Krieg*, he presents a new scenario, in which peoples struggle for both material resources and creature comforts. Like Schmitt, Kondylis believes that we have entered a great "neutralizing epoch" in which all belief-systems that are not compatible with material interest have been neutralized and devalued. In his eagerness to generalize about current Western materialism, Kondylis may go too far—for example, in dismissing entirely Samuel Huntington's thoughtful essay on cultural and religious conflicts in an age of global politics. For Kondylis, all such disputes can be traced to the bitterness caused by material disparities. Although this recurrent judgment in his work recalls the tirades of Third World Marxists, Kondylis has come to it from a non-Marxist perspective. The descendant of a distinguished Greek military family who laments in letters his unheroic existence "as the author of long books in German," he despises the hedonism of postbourgeois democracy. His own sympathies are most clearly with the landed aristocracy, and, after it, with those bourgeois ascetics who built up nation-states and middle-class capitalism. One guesses from his social commentary that wine-sipping yuppies and self-actualizing feminists are less to his liking than the would-be gravediggers of the contemporary West.

It is possible, in any event, to imagine sources of conflict that are neither strictly material in motivation nor tied to obsolete labels. Besides cultural and racial struggles one may foresee other roadblocks to a not-quite-new world order, starting with populist and regional obstacles. Despite the American media's labeling of such populist manifestations as "right wing," present-day demands for regional, participatory democracy rightfully defy the categorization. Though regional nationalism in Quebec has flourished throughout the century, it has been wed over time to different spouses, from the francophone clericalism of Maurice Duplessis to the welfare state socialism of René Lévesque. Regionalist movements in Europe have allied themselves with both left and right, as the occasion presents itself. In the British elections in April, Scottish nationalists, voting overwhelmingly for Labour, did so because Tony Blair promised the Scots home rule. In Italy the Lega Nord has attracted to its brand of regionalism those protesting federal control of welfare and immigration. But the appeal made by *leghisti* to citizen involvement in governmental decisions need not entail a market economy. The league only insists that democracy should involve authentic self-rule.

The populist, regionally based challenge to central administration has not, however, caught on equally everywhere. Unlike in Italy, Austria, and Great Britain, it has remained relatively weak in the United States, where the federal administration and federal courts have had their way with lower levels of government. Here regionalist opposition lacks the firm ethnic base or the memory of a prenational state—both of which are present in Europe—and so the challenge mounted to the central state, if occasionally violent, has been dispersed. In the United States, moreover, the respectable and well-heeled "right" consists of what Fred Barnes styles "big-government conservatives"—advocates of a pro-business welfare state combined with a vigorous foreign policy based on the promotion of "human rights." In point of fact, there is no critical confrontation between this position and the underlying assumptions of the Clinton administration. Real confrontation lies elsewhere, beyond the reprising of antiquated right-left distinctions, and here the struggle unfolding is about nothing less than the meaning of democracy.

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Big Emerging Mistakes

by William R. Hawkins

The Big Ten: The Big Emerging Markets and How They Will Change Our Lives
by Jeffrey E. Garten
New York: Basic Books;
256 pp., $24.00

◆

The theory that "big emerging markets" (BEMs) in the Third World will be the driving force of the world economy, and thus of world politics, has been at the core of the Clinton administration's foreign policy. As Undersecretary of Commerce for International Trade during President Clinton's first term, Jeffrey E. Garten was the principal author of this theory. Garten is now dean of the Yale School of Management; before his government service, he was a managing director of the Blackstone Group, the Wall Street investment firm that also provided Clinton with his first Treasury Secretary, Roger Altman. The Blackstone Group specializes in transnational acquisitions and is partially owned by Nikko Securities of Japan.

Garten's "big ten" are Argentina, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Poland, South Africa, South Korea, and Turkey. Geography and demographics indicate that this is also a list of potential regional powers, and Garten does warn that "it would be dangerous to assume that just because the BEMs are currently preoccupied with economic development . . . they have permanently forgone the militarism that has characterized political entities—cities, city-states, empires, and nations—throughout history." Yet his choice in calling them "markets," not "powers," reveals his expectations. He adheres to the standard liberal view that economic progress and democracy go hand in hand, stating without benefit of historical evidence that "strong democracies will be much less likely to precipitate war."

The shallow nature of Garten's approach can be demonstrated by imagining how much of the 20th century would have been missed by an analyst who thought of the then-emerging states of Germany, Japan, Italy, and the United States primarily as "markets" a century ago. Of course there were such people, operating from the same basis of classical liberalism as Garten: Norman Angell, for instance, who argued in his 1910 best-seller, *The Great Illusion*, that global economic interdependence had already made war unthinkable and geopolitics irrelevant. A century before Angell, French economist Jean-Baptiste Say recommended that ambassadors be eliminated and replaced by consuls whose only mission would be to promote trade.

But Garten's optimism for the long term cannot hide the grim picture he paints of the near one. He calls the 1.5 billion Third World workers expected to enter the global labor market in the next decade "a freight train." These laborers will work at one-tenth the cost of American workers yet be only slightly less productive, owing to the technology, capital, and management skills that the transnational corporations will provide. Garten foresees "a long period of downward pressure on American wages" and a continuing "trend for more American firms to be forced to move some of their manufacturing plants abroad in search of lower costs." The term "forced" in this case is hardly applicable since the Fortune 100 are driving the process, exploiting the "open" world system that officials like Garten have designed to business specifications.

Garten thinks the main challenge will be to get through this period without the emergence of "a charismatic populist leader who fires up disaffected workers and the Congress, leading to a swing toward protectionism. . . . Any protectionism in the West would be a hammer blow to the big emerging markets because of their heavy dependency on exports." As Garten notes, "America will be the prime destination [for BEM exports], for ours is by far the most open economy." Suddenly, the BEMs appear not as customers for American-produced goods but as pools of cheap labor from which to staff the "global factory" in competition with American-based industry. Garten admits that "over the next decade the greatest source of competition for the United States would come from China, South Korea, India, Brazil, and Mexico."

The case for the BEM strategy rests on a highly pessimistic view of the American situation. According to the annual report of the U.S. Trade Representative, "as a mature economy with few domestic opportunities for growth, we must reach the 96 percent of our customers who live outside the United States." Garten himself stated in a *Foreign Affairs* essay published concurrently with his book that, "The country can no longer generate enough growth, jobs, profits, and savings from domestic sources"—following the official line that the United States will become dependent on the BEMs for its future prosperity. In his book, Garten denigrates "an outmoded concept that others need us more than we need them." This is part of his general argument for an appeasement policy toward the BEMs on issues across the board, political and moral as well as economic. The balance of power has already shifted from Washington to Beijing, Jakarta, and Brasília.

There are a number of flaws in this argument, starting with the simplistic equation of wealth with straight demographics. Americans may only be four percent of the world's population, but they account for a quarter of the world's economy. Contrary to left-wing critics, Americans did not become rich by exploiting everyone else; indeed, the country's growth rates and relative position internationally were stronger when trade played less of a role in its economy than it does now. The very slowdown in economic growth of which Garten complains is related to the "free trade" policies and the corporate strategy Garten champions.

The American economy is not inherently weak. It continues to be a large and growing market, importing $795.8 billion worth of manufactured goods in 1996—a 48.3 percent increase over the value imported in 1992. The trade deficit, however, has increased every year under Clinton despite (or because of) his administration's commitment to BEM theory. Americans now import half the manufactured goods they use. The

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American market is serving more as the engine for the accelerated growth of other countries than it is for the growth of the United States.

The United States is deindustrializing on the supply, not on the demand, side. Rising imports are substituting for the expansion of domestic capacity, closing off job opportunities during the cyclical upturn and short-circuiting the long-term growth process. Two dire results follow: slower growth, which does not spread its benefits as widely through society; and a shift in industrial capabilities, which will alter the world balance of power.

Neither of these effects is the concern of the transnational corporations driving economic policy. Their agenda is advanced by the view that, as a nation, the United States is finished, leaving the corporations alone with the capacity to act—which they can do only in a "world without borders." The sole valid function of Washington, in this view, is to convince other governments to follow its lead and abandon any national economic or foreign policy that could hinder elite private interests.

Governments may not, however, shed their responsibility to maximize the prosperity and security of their national territories and citizens; they can only succeed or fail in doing so. The Garten approach is a recipe for failure: there is no necessity to surrender the home market in the pursuit of foreign customers. Garten constantly bemoans leverage by BEMs, and by European and Asian rivals who possess far less power than does the United States. These foreign states do not practice "free trade," yet they have increased their market shares and generated high growth rates. They require companies to locate factories in their territories and to transfer technology to native firms. They run trade surpluses and amass international monetary reserves.

This is how business contributes to national advancement, as the United States itself proved in an earlier era. What those in government need to rediscover is both their own sovereign strength and the underlying strength of the American people. But this will happen only when government is staffed by those whose primary attachment is to the country, not to Wall Street.

William R. Hawkins is Senior Research Analyst for Representative Duncan Hunter (R-CA). The views are his own.

Playback

by J.O. Tate

Raymond Chandler: A Biography
by Tom Hiney
New York: Atlantic Monthly Press;
356 pp., $26.00

◆

The recent death of Robert Mitchum reminds us not only of his appearance in one of the best film noirs, *Out of the Past*, but of his impersonation of the detective Philip Marlowe in the remake of *Farewell, My Lovely* and *The Big Sleep*. Mitchum once claimed that, in his early days, he tended bar for Raymond Chandler himself.

At times, that must have been a big job. Tom Hiney has recounted in this, the newest biography of the man, how Raymond Chandler destroyed himself with alcohol. His literary peers (and juniors), such as Fitzgerald, Hemingway, and Faulkner, knew something about that themselves. But self-destruction and obsessive abuse did not make Chandler famous, even if he is known for them now. It is not Tom Hiney's fault that Chandler's follies darken and dominate his pages—that really was Chandler's doing. Indeed, this biographer knows well that a successful writer is one who can put the best part of himself into words—and that Chandler memorably did.

Consider the ironic proof. As Hiney has noted, a volume entitled *In Search of Literary Los Angeles* (1991), disposing of Chandler in two paragraphs, dismisses him as "a misanthrope and a bigot," which seems a remarkable way to treat the author who virtually created literary Los Angeles. In a similar spirit, Joyce Carol Oates has remarked upon Chandler's racism and misogyny, which some may find as comforting as I do. Such deprecations, in a context that classifies Hawthorne as an oppressor and Melville as a wife-beater, are as perversely welcome as they are obtuse. Tom Hiney has shown how, in context, Chandler was no advocate of any white-male utopia.

Frank MacShane's *Life of Raymond Chandler*, an excellent book, was published over 20 years ago. The London-based journalist Hiney has brought two particular credentials to the job of taking a second look: one is his British background, and the other, oddly enough, is his youth. The result is a striking and effective book.

Since MacShane did his work on Chandler, which also included editing the letters and notebooks, the reputation of his subject has continued to grow. Chandler is everywhere. Chandlerism seems a way of looking at the world, one that is continually revived. We are familiar now with female Philip Marlowes, and with black ones. Not long ago, Chandler's stories were broadcast on cable. *Chinatown* and even *Blade Runner* were paraphrases of Chandler. Robert B. Parker has written "continuations" of Chandler—explicitly as well as implicitly—in his *Spenser* series. Even if we could evade the continual playback of Chandler's screenplays and of the films made from his novels, there would still be the ineffable and inevitable *Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid*. But escaping the mass media by picking up art novels would not efface Chandlerism, for necessary books like Walker Percy's *Lancelot* and Gilbert Sorrentino's *Mulligan Stew* announce an imaginative dependence on Raymond Chandler that is widespread.

Now that Chandler has been published by the Library of America, however, nonsense may perhaps be set aside. After all, his letters and this biography show Chandler to have been an old-fashioned liberal, as you might expect of a man born in 1888 and educated at a public school in England. When he came back to this country, he settled in Los Angeles. After time spent in the Canadian service in the Great War, he began to rise in the oil industry as America boomed in the 1920's. Chandler was fired in the early 30's for drinking and faced the crisis of his life. He determined to fulfill the dream of his youth by writing. The question then was, what to write and how to write it?

Chandler's response was a modest one; he would undertake pulp fiction, stories of action and violence. And he would write for an audience and for money. Having cleared his mind of pretension, he could get on with the job. Eventually, he would meld all of the romantic yearnings and literary aspirations of his youth with a comprehensive grasp of the corruptions of urban life to produce novels that will not die. Tom Hiney has pointed out elements of *Farewell, My Lovely*, *The Lady in the Lake*, and *The Little Sister* that derive directly from

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true-crime stories, for the ultimate paradox of his melodramatic fiction is its firm hold on truth. Chandler has more in common with Balzac and Dickens than he does with his host of imitators.

Hiney's book is flawed by errors in proofreading, among others. His summary of the plot of *Farewell, My Lovely*, for instance, gets whodunit and other things wrong. Even so, his biography of Chandler maintains its firm sense of perspective. He succeeds in showing us the Raymond Chandler who still lives in the imaginations of thousands of readers—the Chandler who knew that imperishable writing "glows with its own heat," and was capable of delivering the same.

J.O. Tate is a professor of English at Dowling College on Long Island.

Beyond Darwinism

by John Caiazza

Darwin's Black Box:
The Biochemical Challenge
to Evolution
by Michael J. Behe
New York: The Free Press;
307 pp., $25.00

◆

In the Victorian era, High Churchmen castigated Darwin as a materialist who would reduce men to mere monkeys, and earnest materialists enunciated a vision of scientific progress that, as it were, only incidentally drained the universe of purpose.

Darwinian propaganda has been with us for 100 years, a mechanical explanation not only of the origins of life—as if that were not enough—but of the human mind, ideas, culture, ethics, and religion. Against these latter-day Huxleys a new champion has appeared: not an Anglican bishop like "Soapy Sam" Wilberforce, who took on T.R. Huxley in a famous Oxford debate, but a biochemist whose researches have convinced him that the reach of Darwinism does not extend to the most basic levels of nature.

Michael Behe is a professor of biochemistry at Lehigh University whose doubts about orthodox Darwinism have earned applause from those who oppose the Darwinian faith, and criticism from evolutionists who claim that his arguments are fraudulent. His reservations about Darwinism in *Darwin's Black Box* are not based on creationism; they are more subtle and responsible. Behe believes that evolution did take place—that life evolved over several billion years from the most primitive to the most complex forms—but he does not believe that the Darwinian account can fully explain this process. Nor does he believe that acceptance of evolution implies materialism, reductionism, or a vision of the natural world devoid of design, Providence, or a Creator.

Behe's book is well organized, presenting arguments in favor of an updated view that design is part of nature while refuting Darwinian propaganda poured forth by the likes of Daniel Bennett and Richard Dawkins. In the heart of the book, however, Behe highlights five biochemical processes so complex that they could not have evolved in the orthodox Darwinian manner, i.e., by a slow and gradual process culling newly mutated characteristics. For there is no functional use for the many elementary parts of these complexes, only for the finished product.

Among the examples that Behe presents are the formation of scabs on cuts and scrapes, which require not only a set of complex organic chemicals which interact to coagulate the blood but a separate protein complex that starts the process of coagulation when blood first escapes through the skin, and another which ends coagulation when the job is done. Obviously, there is no need in nature for a chemical process that ends scabbing unless all the prior processes are in place. Behe argues that these quantum leaps on the biochemical level cannot be explained by the orthodox Darwinian version of evolution by natural selection; rather there had to be a prior design present in nature to help these systems evolve.

Behe does not believe that evolution never took place, but that the motive force of evolution cannot have been the mechanical process postulated by Darwin. It is noteworthy that, although the Darwinian account of natural selection has never been proved true by empirical observation, it is treated by the ultra-orthodox as if it were a well-established scientific law. Since this central dogma of the Darwinian view remains unproved, the orthodox must all the more firmly hold it as an article of scientific faith. It is the Darwinians with their untoward zeal to promote the mechanical vision who now manifest the bad manners of true believers, and who, as a matter of literal fact, describe their position as an "orthodoxy," defined in terms of a "central dogma." Behe's arguments and his evidence of what goes on within Darwin's black box may well have changed the terms of the debate for this generation.

John Caiazza writes from Medford, Massachusetts.

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Letter From San Francisco

by Justin Raimondo

The Black War on Asians

◆

While the media is focused on the alleged threat of a few rural white supremacists holed up somewhere in Idaho, black racism in the inner cities is on the rise. "Viet family flees bomb threat at project," blared the headline in the *San Francisco Examiner* on June 16. Although political correctness forbids even its victims from naming it, black racism, an organized and violent movement growing in numbers and virulence, has bubbled to the surface in San Francisco, where black gangs have targeted Vietnamese residents of public housing projects in a campaign of ethnic cleansing. Six Vietnamese families who had the temerity to move into the overwhelmingly black Alice Griffith public housing unit (known as "Double Rock") in San Francisco's Bayview district were subjected to beatings, harassment, and racial taunts, until they were finally forced to run for their lives. One family returned home to a bomb threat recorded on their answering machine. The caller demanded that the family move out and threatened to bomb their apartment and kill the wife.

Police say this is part of a pattern of hate crimes against Asians in the area: the bomb threat occurred in the context of another incident in which two Asian children were beaten and spray-painted near their home in the Bayview area. Police say that "an adult approached them and called them a racial name and spray-painted the front of the boy's T-shirt." Their black assailant "roughed up" both children, according to the *Examiner*, and "punched the girl in the face."

What is the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the federal agency that runs the projects, doing about it? HUD's reaction to this threatened lynching by a mob of black racists, incredibly enough, was to *give in to the thugs' demands*.

A few years ago, HUD bureaucrats decided that housing projects were to be "integrated"—and called in federal law enforcement agencies to implant a few black families in an all-white Arizona housing project. HUD civil rights enforcer Roberta Achtenberg dispatched a veritable army of federal agents to "desegregate" the place, à la Little Rock. In the case of Double Rock, however, instead of calling in the troops, HUD officials ran up the white flag, pulled the Vietnamese out, and put them up in a hotel.

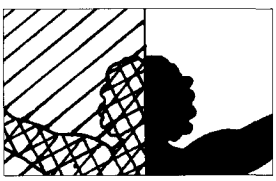
The black gangs that control the neighborhood drug trade have been carrying out a systematic terror campaign against Asians in San Francisco public housing for years—this is not the first time Asians have been driven out of the projects by militant black racists—but the Clinton administration has just deigned to notice. HUD has promised to beef up security, install better lighting, and hire bilingual personnel. HUD undersecretary Andrew Cuomo promised an "investigation." Let him start by probing the pernicious and inflammatory role of his own agency, which has so far not only whitewashed the ethnic cleansing of Double Rock but has been complicit in the victimization of the Vietnamese.

Local HUD officials have, for example, launched a smear campaign against the victims. Acting Housing Authority director Ronnie Davis, echoing the opinions of some black residents of Double Rock, accused the Vietnamese families of concocting the stories about assaults in order to obtain coveted Section 8 housing. (Public housing residents can transfer out of the prison-like crime-ridden projects and be given vouchers accepted by some private landlords.) Another Housing Authority official chimed in: "I have learned that there are people who will do anything for a Section 8 certificate." These government apologists for black racism and terrorism have taken up the cry of the largely black residents of Double Rock, who are up in arms over the fact that the Vietnamese have been put to the front of a long waiting list for the certificates. The legitimacy of the complaint that native-born American blacks are being pushed to the back of the line by immigrants is vitiated by the fact that public housing in San Francisco's Chinatown is orderly, clean, and relatively crime-free. It is not Asians who have turned Double Rock into an urban battleground.

While Cuomo II conducts his leisurely "investigation," and Mayor Willie Brown convenes a "task force," an organized network of criminal gangs with an explicitly racist political agenda is on the attack in the streets of San Francisco. If this were a gang of white supremacists, the armed fist of the federal government would have come crashing down on them without delay or mercy. Black racists, however, are immune to such treatment; not only do they enjoy special exemption from condemnation, but they are actively protected and defended by sympathetic government officials.

And lest anyone think these thugs are not practicing equal opportunity terrorism, two Iraqi families at Double Rock faced the same violently hostile reception and were driven out. These Gulf War refugees, who had risen up against Saddam Hussein, fled to the United States when the rebellion was crushed—only to face a different kind of war. It

LIBERAL ARTS



I AM THE WAY . . .

"Father Pat McNamara, a renegade Catholic priest, charts the course to find God in the New Age areas of channeling, reincarnation, psychic surgery, pyramids, and Native American spirituality."

—from an advertisement for Beauty and the Priest *(Ozark Mountain Publishing)*

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started the night they moved into the housing project: BB gun pellets shot through windows, firecrackers hurled into the house, and a perpetual pounding on the door by thugs camped out on their doorstep. For months they endured robberies, attacks on their children, and nightly assaults on their home, until HUD, in the words of one bureaucrat, finally decided that "it's become real clear to us that their lives are in danger." The Iraqis were moved out, and put up at the Holiday Inn. Asked why he thought he and his fellow Iraqis had been singled out for harassment, Hussan Al-Barakat spoke hesitantly, in his broken English, as if bewildered by the stark contrast of America as he imagined it and the reality of Double Rock: "Maybe I mistaken, but I think they want black family here."

Liberals of all races will one day regret conciliating or even tolerating black racism, for this is a movement with national scope—and growing power. Sonny Carson has made a career out of his crusade to drive all Koreans out of New York City, and the Rodney King uprising in Los Angeles saw Koreans once again bear the brunt. In his infamous Houston speech, Pat Buchanan paid tribute to them for valiantly (and hopelessly) defending their community from rampaging looters during the Los Angeles riots. The media lambasted Buchanan for his "racism," but the real story is that Pat was speaking out *against* racism—black racism. (The irony is that he was holding up these immigrant Koreans as models of Americanism, against the thuggish example of their native-born tormentors.)

Black hatred of whites, and of Asians of all denominations, is the grisly and frightening secret at the heart of American race relations, the Hate That Dares Not Speak Its Name. Black racism has been relegated to the fringe by liberal elites in government and the media, supposedly confined to the likes of Carson, Louis Farrakhan, and the black fringe. But the O. J. Simpson trial forced us to confront it as a mass phenomenon—still without naming it.

The left's riposte to conservatives who condemn affirmative action as racism in action is to deny that blacks (or other "powerless" oppressed minorities) are even *capable* of racism, since they lack economic and political clout. But in the case of Double Rock, blacks *do* have the power: to intimidate and physically assault Asians and others with the wrong skin color. They are so powerful, in fact, that an armed gang of black racists faced down a federal agency and won without firing a shot—which is more than Randy Weaver or the Branch Davidians can say.

Justin Raimondo writes from San Francisco, California.

Letter From Britain

by Christie Davies

Where Euroregulation Meets Socialism

◆

John Major lost the British election in 1997 not because Tony Blair's "New" Labour Party had stolen the Conservatives' policies but because the Conservatives adopted socialist ones. The last ten years have seen an explosive rise in levels of bureaucratic regulation in Britain, which have particularly hit small business and also professional people, especially those working in the public sector. These groups may be considered a Conservative government's natural supporters, but many of their members will have voted for the Labour or Liberal Democrat parties out of sheer frustration.

It is impossible to find good National Health Service (Britain's system of socialized medicine) dentists any more because they have all gone private to avoid a system that insists on the provision and justification of a detailed treatment plan for each patient. As my own, now private dentist put it: "I came into the profession to look after patients' teeth, not to fill in forms." For exactly the same reasons many able and experienced schoolteachers have taken early retirement to be replaced by semiliterate young dullards who cannot teach but who love staff meetings. Everyone is tied up in the creation of paper trails for a distant centralized inspectorate that does not understand the old proverb, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." When a local doctor (a general practitioner) retires it is difficult to find a replacement, even though the job pays well and is rightly held in high esteem. Who wants to shuffle doc-

TELOS

A Quarterly Journal of Critical Thought

Does it still make sense to talk about Left and Right? What remains of the communist project after the collapse of the Soviet Empire? Has collectivism become official liberal ideology? What is the impact of feminism, anti-racism and multiculturalism on American traditions? What has happened to the American Right after its anti-communist ideology became obsolete? Are paleo-conservatives and neo-conservatives on the same political side? What does it mean to be a conservative today? What remains of American particularism in the age of globalization? Is the crisis of conservatism but another version of the crisis of liberalism?

These questions are debated in the pages of *Telos* by independent scholars unafraid to challenge various ideological establishments. Recent issues have re-examined the meaning of American federalism, the populist legacy, the resurgence of nationalism, separatism, etc. Future issues will deal with the crisis of European Unification, the collapse of American education, the disintegration of "humanism" and the possibility of religious alternatives.

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uments on a computer rather than cure people?

Attorneys paid by the government on a case-by-case basis to do "legal aid" work for the poor and who deal with divorce, small civil claims, and criminal defense work, constitute a patchwork of small partnerships spread across the country, but Major's government deliberately sought to concentrate this work in the hands of a few large firms. Lord Mackay of Clashfern, who was the Conservative government's Lord Chancellor (the head of the legal system), redesigned the system in such a way that poor clients will no longer be able to choose who represents them but will be forced to take their cases to lawyers belonging to a monopoly licensed and franchised by the state. Independent practitioners are being forced out of business by their own principled unwillingness to allow semieducated high school graduates, employed by the British legal aid board as inspectors, to go through their confidential files.

Behind all these disasters lies a socialist obsession with providing everyone with more free health, "education," teeth, and pseudosafety. In the past this was done by raising taxes; under the pseudoconservative John Major, the pretense was maintained that more of everything could be provided by employing extra commissars to squeeze the suppliers. Bold and meaningless planning targets worthy of Stalin filled such foolish documents as "Health of the Nation," and absurd slogans, mission statements, and charters proliferated. The new professionally unqualified administrators all spoke about enforcing "policy" and "priorities" and demanded endless quantities of information to enable them to do so. This meaningless information is then used by these bureaucratic clerks to nag and torment the same skilled professionals who have slaved to provide it. Chuck it, Major . . . or rather, the British people chucked you.

In Britain, well-run and effective small private schools have been forced to close because they could not provide all the nonsense specified in the bureaucratic "National Curriculum" laid down by the central government, even though their pupils were better educated and better behaved than those from the state-run schools. Many other small businesses are in difficulties because they cannot standardize or label their goods according to the choking net of the law or comply with absurd and unnecessary health, fire, and safety regulations. A nonsmoking colleague of mine has recently been told that he is a fire hazard because he has too many books and papers in his office. How do British second-hand bookshops survive?

Many of these rules were invented by the enthusiastic socialists who run the European Community in Brussels, but why does the British government have to enforce them? In a British world of chronic shortages, why is there always enough money for administrators, snoopers, and regulation enforcers? A nonsocialist, freedom-loving government would have made sure that there were never enough staff and resources to enforce the decrees of Britain's European masters. Why did Britain not simply allow her small traders to go on working just as they chose, by assigning an inadequate number of idle officials to enforce the rules, by slowness to prosecute, and by imposing trivial sentences? After all, that is the way the British government currently deals with juvenile delinquents, burglars, and illegal immigrants. Instead, the owners of small abattoirs, cheese-makers, and horticulturists have been relentlessly persecuted by British officials whose interpretation of the Brussels regulations is more rigid, detailed, and socialist than anywhere else in Europe. In no other country have Euroregulations been expanded and gold-plated in the way they have been in England.

Anyone who has ever complained to Britain's politicians about these insolent folk or about the arbitrary behavior of Britain's innumerable ruling quangos (quasi-autonomous, nongovernmental organizations) set up by Parliament has been told by politicians that they could not possibly interfere. In this way they hope that the British people's resentment and hatred of living in an over-regulated society would be focused on their most immediate tormentors and not on those who were really to blame—the government. It was a tactic that did not work, and that is why John Major's socialist government was ignominiously kicked out of office. The key virtue of British democracy is that the people do have the power to "turn the rascals out." However, matters are now getting even worse. Although he will not admit it, Labourite Tony Blair loves the socialist regulated society even more than John Major did.

Christie Davies is chairman of the sociology department at the University of Reading, England.

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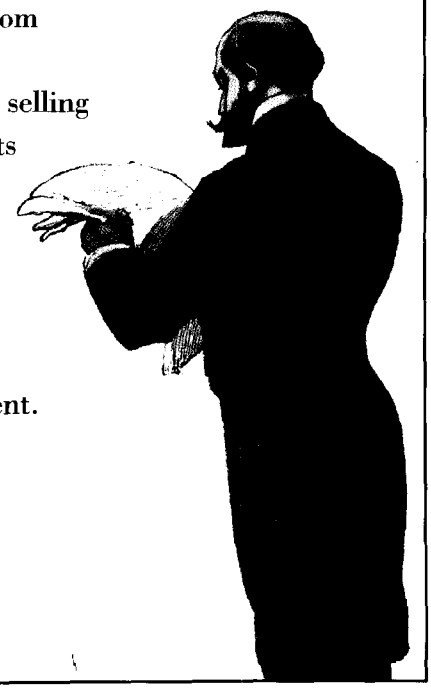

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POLITICS

The Politics of Hispanic Identity

by Joseph E. Fallon

The federal government officially recognizes "Hispanic"—an artificial and arbitrary concept devoid of ethnic, racial, cultural, or linguistic meanings—as a legitimate collective identity for two reasons. Domestically, it is to create a "Hispanic nation" within the United States, to inflate the numerical size of that "nation," and to have all members of that "nation" eligible for affirmative action programs. Internationally, it is to legitimize "Hispanic" power in the 18 Spanish-speaking countries in the Western Hemisphere by recognizing the population of each as a homogenous "ethnic" group, thereby denying the existence of non-Hispanic peoples and enabling the suppression of their languages, cultures, and religions.

Achieving the domestic objectives, which virtually guarantees the realization of the international one, required rewriting the history of the United States. As George Orwell recognized in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*: "Who controls the past controls the future; who controls the present controls the past." According to this historical revisionism, a significant Mexican population lived in what is today Texas and the Southwest of the United States before the arrival of the Americans; Mexican-Americans have always been loyal to the United States; and the status of Mexicans and Mexican-Americans in the United States has historically been more comparable to that of African-Americans than that of "whites."

Between 1820 and 1900, the average annual number of Mexican nationals immigrating to the United States was only 350. The demographic impact of such numbers on the Mexican-American community was negligible since as many Mexican nationals departed as entered. This changed dramatically after 1900, especially during the two decades spanning the "Mexican Revolution" and its aftermath. Between 1910 and 1930, nearly 700,000 Mexicans crossed the border into the United States—approximately three percent of the entire population of Mexico.

Most entered Texas. It was this post-1910 immigration which for the first time established a significant Mexican presence in Texas. In 1821, when American colonists began to arrive, there were only an estimated 3,000 Mexicans in the entire Mexican province of Texas, and most of them lived southwest of present-day Colorado. By 1834, Americans outnumbered Mexicans by ten to one. In 1860, there were only an estimated 12,000 ethnic Mexicans living in all of Texas—less than two percent of a total population numbering over 600,000. By 1900, the estimated number of ethnic Mexicans living in Texas was only 70,000—less than three percent of a total population in excess of three million. In San Antonio, ethnic Germans outnumbered ethnic Mexicans.

The estimated number of ethnic Mexicans living in the other Southwestern states in 1900 was similarly low: Arizona—14,172 out of a total population of 122,931, or less than 12 percent; California—8,096 out of a total population of 1,485,053, or less than one percent; and New Mexico—6,649 out of a total population of 195,310, or less than four percent.

Between 1910 and 1920, the politics of the Mexican Revolution followed the wave of Mexicans into the United States. It consisted of acts of violence by rival Mexican warlords—principally Victoriano Huerta, Venustiano Carranza, and Francisco "Pancho" Villa—and by Mexicans living in the United States—such as Agustin S. Garza, Luis de la Rosa, Aniceto Pizana, and Esteban Fierros, all from Texas. Those perpetrated by the former included armed raids into Texas and New Mexico, as well as threats of a general war against the United States. Those committed by the latter centered on the "Plan de San Diego," which called for a general insurrection by Mexicans living throughout the Southwest of the United States and the extermination of European-American males residing in that region.

Many historians believe the Plan de San Diego had a foreign, chiefly Mexican, component to its origin. Some consider it to have been part of a conspiracy for returning the deposed Mexican dictator Huerta to power. In any event, the plan was then used by the reigning dictator of Mexico, Carranza, as a tool for extorting official recognition for his government from Washington, which is why many maintain that the Plan de San Diego originated with Carranza from the start. Further disagreement centers on the role, if any, of the Imperial German Government—which was endeavoring to keep the United States out of World War I—in formulating or funding the proposed insurrection.

However, several historians, including those who believe that Huerta and/or Carranza were involved in the conspiracy, judge the plan to have been "an authentic product of the border region." Championing this opinion, the militant Hispanic publication *AZTLAN: Chicano Journal of Social Science & The Arts* printed in its Spring 1970 issue: "Mexicans, citizens of the United States and Mexico, conceived, wrote, and attempted to implement a manifesto of liberation entitled the Plan de San Diego." The article included an English translation of the plan and justified its 15 points, "harsh as they may seem," on the ground that Mexicans in the United States had historically suffered from "the racism, brutality, and fear of the Anglo population."

Point One: "On the 20th day of February 1915, at two o'clock in the morning, we will arise in arms against the Government and country of the United States of North America . . . we will proclaim the independence and segregation of the States bordering upon the Mexican Nation, which are: TEXAS, NEW MEXICO, ARIZONA, COLORADO, AND UPPER CALIFORNIA, OF WHICH States the Republic of MEXICO was robbed in a most perfidious manner by North American imperialism."

Point Two: Our "army shall be known by the name of: 'LIBERATING ARMY FOR RACE AND PEOPLES.'"

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Point Five: "It is strictly forbidden to hold prisoners . . . they shall be shot immediately without any pretext."

Point Seven: "Every North American over sixteen years of age shall be put to death; and only the aged men, the women, and the children shall be respected . . ."

Point Eight: "THE APACHES of Arizona, as well as the INDIANS (RED SKINS) of the Territory, shall be given every guarantee; and their lands which have been taken from them shall be returned to them to the end that they may assist us in the cause which we defend."

Point Ten: "The movement having gathered force, and once having possessed ourselves of the States above alluded to, we shall proclaim them an INDEPENDENT REPUBLIC, later requesting (if it be thought expedient) annexation to MEXICO . . ."

Point 11: "When we shall have obtained independence for the negroes . . . we shall aid them in obtaining six States of the American Union, which States border upon those already mentioned, and they may form from these six States a Republic that they may, therefore, be independent."

Point 12: " . . . bearing in mind that this is a war without quarter; nor shall any leader enroll in his ranks any stranger, unless said stranger belong to the Latin, the negro, or the Japanese race."

With the exception of half a dozen Japanese, who apparently served as ordnance experts, participants in the Plan de San Diego were exclusively Mexicans and Mexican-Americans. Although points eight and 11 had been included in the manifesto to win the support of African-Americans and American Indians, both communities refused to participate.

Organized into armed bands of between 25 and 100 men with bases located in northern Mexico, the Liberating Army for Races and Peoples launched 27 raids into the United States. The guerrillas murdered 33 Americans, wounded 24 others, destroyed thousands of dollars worth of property, and "ethnically cleansed" south Texas of thousands of American families, but they failed to achieve any of the objectives stated in their manifesto. By June 1916, 16 months after the date for the general insurrection, the Plan de San Diego had been defeated by the military response of the Texas Rangers and the U.S. Army.

In the continental United States prior to 1930, everyone who today would be officially designated as "Hispanic" was legally classified as "white." Virtually all were of Mexican origin, although a sizable community in New Mexico steadfastly maintained, and still do, that they are of Spanish origin. Even the segregationist state of Texas, with its Jim Crow laws against African-Americans, legally classified both Mexican immigrants and Mexican-Americans as "white."

However, in the aftermath of the failed race war attempted under the Plan de San Diego and amid fear that many among the nearly 700,000 Mexicans who had entered the United States between 1910 and 1930 might possibly be fifth columnists for continuing Mexican irredentist claims to the Southwest, the federal government decided to ascertain the number of Mexicans living in the United States. To do that, the 1930 census counted "Mexicans" separately from "whites" and defined them as everyone who was born or whose parents were born in Mexico and "who is not definitely white." Revised statistics for the 1910 and 1920 censuses were presented to correspond with this new classification.

The official designation of "Mexican" as a nonwhite group along with "Negro," "Indian," "Chinese," "Japanese," and "Filipino" was *opposed* by Mexican-Americans, including the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), formed in 1929. They successfully lobbied the federal government to reclassify all Mexicans, immigrants and native-born, as "white." They did not lobby for the abolition of segregation.

Between 1940 and 1976, Mexicans remained officially classified as "white" in conformity to the expressed wishes of that community. However, after the introduction of affirmative action programs with their policy of discrimination against "whites," Mexican-Americans reversed themselves. They now successfully lobbied the federal government, in 1976 and 1977, to be classified as a nonwhite "ethnic" minority for purposes of eligibility for all affirmative action programs.

In 1976, the American GI Forum, the Latin American Manufacturing Association, LULAC, the National Congress of Hispanic American Citizens, the National Council of La Raza, and SER—organizations representing primarily individuals whose ancestry was Mexican, but including those with origins in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and other Spanish-speaking countries as well—successfully lobbied for passage of Public Law 94-311. This legislation, signed into law on June 16, 1976, created an umbrella term entitled "Americans of Spanish origin or descent" for all those who can "trace their origin or descent from Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Central and South America, and other Spanish-speaking countries."

This definition had two fundamental flaws. First, it equated "state" with "ethnicity." Mexico is the state. Therefore, its inhabitants are ethnic "Mexicans." According to this logic, the population of Belgium is composed of ethnic "Belgians," not Flemings and Walloons; the population of Switzerland is composed of ethnic "Swiss," not French, Germans, and Italians; and the population of pre-1990 Yugoslavia was composed of ethnic "Yugoslavs," not Albanians, Croatians, Macedonians, Serbians, and Slovenians.

The second flaw was assuming that a common European language as the language of government meant a common identity. Eighteen Spanish-speaking countries and Puerto Rico, with antagonistic, sometimes violent "national" rivalries—Mexico and Guatemala, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, El Salvador and Honduras, Honduras and Nicaragua, Nicaragua and Costa Rica, Panama and Colombia, Colombia and Venezuela, Colombia and Ecuador, Ecuador and Peru, Peru and Chile, Chile and Bolivia, Bolivia and Paraguay, Paraguay and Argentina, and Argentina and Chile—were declared by Congress to constitute a common "national" identity. By this logic, a common identity must be shared by India and the Philippines and by Canada and Haiti, since both sets of countries have a common European language as a language of government—English for the former and French for the latter.

Public Law 94-311 further stated: "a large number of Americans of Spanish origin or descent suffer from racial, social, economic, and political discrimination and are denied the basic opportunities they desire as American citizens." This law thus mandated federal agencies to "collect, and publish regularly, statistics which indicate the social, health, and economic condition of Americans of Spanish origin or descent." In addition, the Census Bureau was required to provide both Spanish-language census questionnaires and Spanish-speaking

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enumerators, and to "implement an affirmative action program . . . for the employment of personnel of Spanish origin or descent." The implementation of affirmative action at the Census Bureau initiated a process that quickly made "Americans of Spanish origin or descent" legally eligible for other types of affirmative action programs.

The terminology adopted in Public Law 94-311 was revised and finalized in 1977. On May 12, the Office of Management and Budget issued Directive No. 15, entitled "Race and Ethnic Standards for Federal Statistics and Administrative Reporting." This directive replaced the phrase "Americans of Spanish origin or descent" with the term "Hispanic," and expanded the definition to read "A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race." The original 1976 definition was potentially limited by the words "origin or descent from . . . Spanish-speaking countries." By employing the phrase, "or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race," the revised 1977 definition became more encompassing and further inflated the number of "Hispanics." Without exception, anyone living in or having emigrated from Spain, Puerto Rico, the 18 Spanish-speaking countries in the Western Hemisphere, or Equatorial Guinea in West Africa, for that matter, was now officially classified a "Hispanic." However, since the revised definition emphasized "Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race," it was also possible to include under "Hispanic" individuals from the Philippines, Guam, the Northern Marianas, the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia, as well as from Jamaica, Trinidad, and the Dutch West Indies.

With Directive No. 15, the process begun the previous year was complete and the domestic purpose for the "Hispanic" identity was realized. The federal government had officially recognized a "Hispanic nation" within the borders of the United States, had adopted a legal definition which inflates the numerical size of this "nation" to the maximum degree possible, and had declared members of this "nation" to be eligible for affirmative action programs.

The opportunism involved in advancing the "Hispanic" identity is staggering. When being "white" conferred legal benefits, Hispanics, to use the current terminology, successfully lobbied to be classified as "white" and allied themselves politically with European-Americans against African-Americans. When being "nonwhite" conferred legal benefits, Hispanics successfully lobbied to be classified as a nonwhite "ethnic" group for purposes of affirmative action and politically allied themselves with African-Americans against European-Americans. In both instances, the losers in this political game of shifting legal status have been African-Americans.

Bigotry, however, is inseparable from the concept of "Hispanic." Advanced by its supporters as recognition of "ethnic" diversity, the term "Hispanic" is, in fact, a complete denial and suppression of diversity—ethnic, racial, cultural, and linguistic—as the official definition adopted by the federal government shows.

First, non-Spanish surnames are classified as "Hispanic." The Basques are the most adversely affected by this discrimination. While most Basques inhabit northern Spain, their culture, language, and origin are distinct from the rest of the country, which largely explains why Spanish authorities have persecuted them throughout much of the 20th century. Although a small European nation, the Basques played a large role in Spain's colonization of the Western Hemisphere. Their surnames are common in Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, and Central and South America. Typical Basque surnames which Washington now classifies as "Hispanic" include: Aguirre, Arteaga, Echeverria, Garate, Iturbide, Uribe, Vizcaino, and Zavala. This is the equivalent of the federal government classifying Irish surnames as English, Dutch surnames as German, Polish surnames as Russian, Korean surnames as Japanese, or Tibetan surnames as Chinese.

Second, non-Spanish ethnic groups are classified as "Hispanic." Victims of this discrimination include Arabs, Basques, Catalans, Chinese, English, Germans, Irish, Italians, Japanese, and Welsh, among others, who are classified as "Hispanic" if they live in or have immigrated to the United States from any Spanish-speaking country. In population size, Argentina is the fourth largest Spanish-speaking country in the world. Many Argentineans, however, are not Spanish. Italians constitute a plurality of the population. Yet the United States officially classifies Argentina and its entire multiethnic population as "Hispanic."

Third, indigenous Indian nations are classified as "Hispanic." This policy realizes, however unintentionally, a stated goal of former Guatemalan dictator and mass murderer General Oscar Mejia Victores: "We must get rid of the words 'indigenous' and 'Indian.'" Among the indigenous peoples living in Spanish-speaking countries who, under the "Hispanic" definition, officially became "unpeople"—reminiscent of the treatment accorded small nations that fell out of favor with the Communist Party in the old Soviet Union—are the Mixtec of Mexico; the Maya of Mexico and Guatemala; the Pipil of El Salvador; the Miskito, Sumo, and Rama of Honduras and Nicaragua; the Guaymi and Kuna of Panama; the Quechua and Aymara of Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia; the Guarani of Paraguay; and the Mapuche of Chile.

Fourth, English-speaking African-Caribbeans, primarily of Jamaican origin, are classified as "Hispanic." Most are descended from British West Indians who immigrated to Central America to work on the Panama Canal and the banana plantations. A small percentage can trace their origin to African slaves brought in by the British to work in the timber industry. There are settlements of English-speaking African-Caribbeans all along the Caribbean coast of Central America, including Bluefields in Nicaragua, Puerto Limon in Costa Rica, and Colon in Panama.

Since the United States refuses to apply the methodology it employed in creating the "Hispanic" identity to any other countries, the denial of the existence of these non-Hispanic populations of Latin America is deliberate policy. By consigning non-Hispanics to the status of an "unpeople," Washington legitimized "Hispanic" power in the 18 Spanish-speaking countries in the Western Hemisphere. This effectively allows "Hispanic" regimes to continue persecuting non-Hispanics without fear of condemnation from the United States.

Two decades have elapsed since the "Hispanic" identity gained official recognition in Washington. But as the AZTLAN movement (with its own version of the Plan de San Diego), M.E.Ch.A., the "Brown Berets," the demagoguery of participants at both the January 1995 California "Latino Leadership Summit Conference Response to Prop 187" and the October 1996 "Latino March on Washington, D.C.," and the organized voter fraud involving illegal aliens in the November 1996 election demonstrate,

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the "Hispanic" identity is more than mere political opportunism and intellectual fraud. It is an ideology of hate in quest of political domination.

Joseph E. Fallon writes from Rye, New York.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Polonophobia, Cont.

by Paul Gottfried

Polonophobia," my essay in the January issue of *Chronicles*, engendered moving and informed responses for which I am most grateful. Professors Ewa Thompson and Alex Kurczaba and Dr. Wojciech Wierzewski have all praised me generously in letters to the editor [Eds. note: See the Polemics and Exchanges section of the April issue], but, according to Managing Editor Theodore Pappas, their praise may be equaled in intensity by the hate calls he has received from readers who refuse to submit letters. One heartening development is that my essay can now be further discussed in Poland. Two widely respected Polish publications, *Respublica* and *Arcana* (the latter edited by the distinguished Polish historian Andrzej Nowak, who is a close friend of professors Thompson and Kurczaba), have both printed translations.

Allow me to clarify what I was trying to say and what I did not mean to say in my essay. I was certainly not maintaining that Poland has no history of anti-Semitism. Alas, it does, but not to the same extent as its Russian and Ukrainian neighbors. Moreover, the interwar Polish republic did not make all possible efforts to assimilate its large and, for the most part, culturally alien Jewish minority. In the 1930's, after the death of its gallant and magnanimous president Józef Pilsudski, the Polish government imposed educational and social disabilities on the upwardly mobile segments of its Jewish population.

This policy was plainly stupid, as assimilated Polish Jewish intellectuals have pointed out to me. For it struck precisely at those Jews, like my late father-in-law and my learned correspondent Professor Stanley Stein, who readily identified themselves with the Polish nation. The Polonized Jewish middle class had most in common with its Polish Catholic counterpart. Its members, not the Polish Orthodox Jews who were light years away from the Poles culturally, read Adam Mickiewicz and other patriotic poets and were coming to view themselves as Poles in the interwar years. Despite his Jewish antecedents, the late Leopold Tyrmand, the first editor of this magazine, was an outspoken Polonophile, and one critical reason for this was that he was steeped in Polish culture. If the Poles had played their cards right and had not been crushed by the Germans and Russians, they might have had many more Jews with the same orientation.

Even so, some of the worst or ugliest things that have befallen the Poles, from being devastated by Hitler's and Stalin's armies to being savaged in the American and Canadian press, were not or are not their fault. They occurred either from being in the wrong place geographically or from having incurred the disfavor of powerful malicious enemies. Indeed, the Polonophobia noted by me and my respondents has neither a functional nor rational basis. Dumping on Southern whites and their historical symbols makes good sense from the standpoint of the managerial-therapeutic state. Given the South's history of regionalism and rebellion against the central government, supporters of the present American regime have every reason to play up the "burden" of Southern history. It also makes sense to play off blacks against whites, particularly Southern whites, inasmuch as blacks are reliable backers of an expanding and socially intrusive state. Such a strategy continues what Radical Republicans did after the Civil War.

One can even concede some strategic value in having the World Jewish Congress and its political spokesman, Al D'Amato, go after the Swiss as Nazi sympathizers. Accusing the Swiss of pro-Nazi sentiments for holding on to the bank accounts of Jews who perished under the Nazis may be defensible strategically for those looking for money. The Swiss are loaded, and though they spent World War II armed to the teeth against a German invasion, they do speak a German dialect, and many of them look Teutonic. Though the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* and its letter writers have protested this shakedown, liberal Swiss clergy and Swiss politicians capable of "growth" are now calling for a "reconsideration of Swiss history." They want something similar to the "historical revision" that was undertaken by the Germans under Allied pressure after World War II. In the end, the Swiss federal government agreed to set up a "fund" that would go to the families of holocaust victims, though not exclusively to those with unredeemed Swiss bank accounts.

But Poland is neither Switzerland nor the American South. It is hard to see what advantage, other than venting hate, can be gained by the recent anti-Polish broadsides. Equally noteworthy, the American Jews who express or compose these invectives have usually no direct relation to Poland. Their families left generations ago, when Poland was an occupied country, and their Jewish ancestors typically came from the Pale of Settlement, which had a heavily Jewish composition and was run by a Russian administration. All of these generalizations certainly would apply to that vocal American Jewish Polonophobe Alan Dershowitz, whose family migrated from the Pale of Settlement to Brooklyn in the early 20th century. Still other American Jews are descended from those who came from Galicia, a region of southern Poland ruled by a benevolent Austrian emperor, Franz Josef, when their ancestors arrived in the United States in search of financial opportunities. In the end, Jews did not come to the United States because Poles or a Polish state oppressed them, save for a negligible number that arrived in the 1930's. Nor was it Poles but Ukrainians and rampaging Cossacks whom Eastern European Jews associate with pogroms.

I mention these circumstances to explain my own surprise that American Jewish organizations, journalists, and moral spokespersons harbor such intense dislike for the Poles. Such a dislike would

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not much matter if those who expressed it were, say, coal miners in West Virginia or wheat farmers in South Dakota. As it is, however, they are disproportionately represented in verbal and media professions in the major cities. And while it is possible to trace their attitudes to general social or cultural causes—e.g., the dissimilarities between Eastern European peasant societies and Jewish urban-dwellers, or to the phobias that existed in Polish Jewish ghetto cultures—it is hard to understand the special dislike that American Jews, particularly liberal ones, reserve for the Poles. I have heard it expressed many times, and the shared suffering undergone by Polish Catholics and Polish Jews only seems to have intensified these hostile feelings.

Feeding this hate is, among other problems, a situation delicately mentioned by Professor Thompson and alluded to by Dr. Wierzewski: the alliance between American Jewish victimologists and the political left. Soviet Jewish collaborators have been recycled as Jewish victims if they died at the hands of anti-communist Poles. This is illustrated by the uncritical publicity showered on Yaffa Eliach, whose father's house was fired on by the Polish Home Front in somewhat embarrassing circumstances. It appears that Eliach's father had close relations with the NKVD and had welcomed the Soviet secret police into his home, when they and other parts of the Soviet occupying forces were rounding up and killing the noncommunist Polish resistance. As Professor Thompson suggests, it is Ms. Eliach and her supporters who must face the past honestly before making revisionist demands upon others.

Finally, it behooves those who were not part of the bloody and tragic history of Eastern and Central Europe to refrain from rash, uninformed judgments. The truth is that many of the inhabitants of that region, faced by brutal historical turns, became both victims and victimizers. Baltic and Ukrainian victims of Stalin collaborated with Hitler's forces, and Jewish survivors of the Nazi occupation, like my cousins in Budapest, went to work for the Soviets. Though this may not have happened in every case, such collaboration with totalitarian killers by victims of other brutal regimes was a fact of life for those in the area between Germany and Russia in the 1940's. Such behavior is not admirable, but it is understandable.

What is neither admirable nor understandable is the boundless stupidity of an American culture which in the course of my own life has celebrated both Nazi and Soviet collaborators: in one case, as democratic anticommunists during the 1950's; and in the other, more recently, as victims of Nazis—i.e., white, homophobic Christians. Add to this the indiscriminate journalistic assaults on the Poles, who, whatever their shortcomings, suffered grievously under *two* murderous despotisms and, until 1944, both despotisms simultaneously, and one gets an idea of the moral cretinism into which our Fourth Estate has plunged. Cicero was correct to note that there are those men *quos infamiae suae neque pudeat neque taedent*, who feel neither shame nor disgust when they have utterly disgraced themselves.

Paul Gottfried is a professor of humanities at Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania.

LITERATURE

The Black Nationalism of George S. Schuyler

by Nicholas Stix

Decisions, decisions. Such is the life of a black man in America today. Whether to be a black nationalist, a black Muslim, an Afrocentrist, or simply a color-blind Christian—a.k.a. an "Oreo," a traitor to the black race. Such choices are not new; they were made by black Americans in earlier generations, dramatically in the case of George S. Schuyler.

Now largely forgotten, Schuyler had more influence on black readers than any other black journalist in his time or since, and only W.E.B. DuBois (who was far less prolific as a journalist) could match him for talent. Soldier, journalist, satirist, pulp-fiction writer, editor, intellectual—the "black Mencken" (as Schuyler was known) was one of America's most gifted observers. A radical individualist, Schuyler made a career of lampooning "race men," many of whom he accused of secretly desiring to be white. And yet, at times, he wrote as a virulent race man, speaking approvingly "as a military man" of a coming racial conflagration. He spent most of his career (1924-1966) writing for the *Pittsburgh Courier*, long America's most popular national weekly Negro newspaper, written for colored people who did not mix with whites, but in 1928 he married a white woman, the former Josephine Cogdell.

Schuyler, the son of a chef, was born in Providence, Rhode Island, and raised in Syracuse, New York. Schuyler's Syracuse was a brewery and factory town, in which blacks and whites worked together, played together as children, and surprisingly often . . . married.

Schuyler took a snobbish pride in emphasizing that his family had been free for at least 150 years before he was born. However, he was no snob when it came to work and morals. He was not embarrassed by his mother's and aunt's decision to take in folks' laundry after his father died, when George was only nine years old.

As his biographer, Michael Peplow, noted in *George S. Schuyler* (1980), Schuyler was something of a black Horatio Alger, having been inculcated while in diapers "in traditional Yankee virtues like self-discipline, independence, thrift, and industry." But that was the older Schuyler. Earlier in his career, Schuyler had a distinctly cosmopolitan understanding of culture and social relations. It was only late in life that he returned to his small-town roots and a simpler approach to life.

When second lieutenant George Schuyler returned to America following Army service, primarily in Hawaii (1912-1919), he found city ghettoes teeming with transplanted Southern Negroes, displaced by changes in agricultural technology. Faced with urban squalor, culture shock, and a racism without any gentility or paternalism to cushion its blows, the uprooted Negroes were not flourishing in the cracks. The urban black middle class, so far from encouraging the immigrants, treated them with contempt.

A new class of colored urban demagogues arose to minister to the new black masses, speaking in peculiar new tongues. Though they used biblical imagery, these new preachers painted images of salvation and retribution in this

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world, in which Negroes would not only be saved but would exact vengeance upon their white oppressors. In rapid succession, Noble Drew Ali (murdered by rivals within his church in 1916), Marcus Garvey (convicted of mail fraud in 1923, deported in 1927), and Wallace Fard ("disappeared" in 1933, perhaps murdered by his friend and successor, the Honorable Elijah Muhammad), arose to minister to impoverished, confused, and angry black masses.

Schuyler recognized that the Talented Tenth movement, like the NAACP (founded in 1909 by Jewish socialists led by Joel Spingarn, with DuBois as the token black) and the white-financed Harlem Renaissance of the 1920's, was a case of wealthy whites indulging their fantasy of a "black" movement. Schuyler excoriated the Renaissance men as "lampblacked Anglo-Saxons" (a precursor of the "Oreo" charge), and in a famous essay in the *Nation*, he mocked their movement as "The Negro-Art Hokum." Schuyler denied the possibility, in a nation in which Negroes and whites lived side by side, of a separate "black" aesthetic.

In his satirical 1931 novel *Black No More*, Schuyler mocked the "race men" for secretly wishing to be white, "integrationists" such as the goateed DuBois (as "Dr. Shakespeare Agamemnon Beard") for profiting from black misery, and racist whites for using blacks to act out fantasies of primitivism. Like many satires, *Black No More* takes an extreme idea to its logical conclusion, and asks: What if white America did not have any more Negroes to kick around? As the story proceeds, the colored Dr. Junius Crookman invents an operation for making black folks white-skinned and straight-haired. In lightning speed, the nation becomes monochromatic as its entire black population "vanishes." Crookman becomes an instant millionaire as blacks flock to him, whereafter they change their names, rewrite their pasts, and take up with unknowing white consorts. No lack of comic and dramatic complications ensue when it becomes clear that the operation does not change the genetic program for the pigmentation of one's offspring. The black nationalists and their white spouses then have a rude awakening, as their first-born are all mulattos. And so America goes from being Negro-free to being white-free.

In *Black No More*, Schuyler assumed that most of humanity is closer to the Devil than to angels (his favorite metaphor for American race relations was an "insane asylum"); that the majority of men are con men, and that the few who truly believe in anything, as in the case of the novel's white supremacist leader, are even more pathetic. For Schuyler, DuBois' Talented Tenth of colored society was of no more help to the average Negro than the leaders of the racist white order. Indeed, he saw those who made a profession of railing against Jim Crow as having the strongest interest in its preservation: every lynching brought in more money from rich white reformers. Moreover, Schuyler saw black nationalist rhetoric as a smoke screen obscuring its practitioners' contempt for their erstwhile constituents, whose pockets they were busy picking. We are all the same, argued Schuyler—and God help us! Ultimately, he surmises, if there were no color line, men would invent one.

Schuyler was clearly the most influential and most gifted black journalist this country has ever seen. His serials *The Black Internationale: Story of Black Genius Against the World* and *Black Empire: An Imaginative Story of a Great New Civilization in Modern Africa* were alone responsible for doubling the *Courier*'s circulation to 250,000 between 1936 and 1938. Meanwhile, Schuyler was a regular contributor to an astounding variety of white and black socialist and white conservative publications, including W.E.B. DuBois' *The Crisis*, A. Philip Randolph's *The Messenger*, the *Nation*, and his friend and mentor H.L. Mencken's *American Mercury*. The very people he so often satirized admired him in public and employed him as a writer, an editor, and a manager.

Following Schuyler's ultimate break with the *Courier* in 1966, he published his autobiography, *Black and Conservative*, and became a regular staff member at William Loeb's *Manchester Union Leader*. The once militant, colored socialist also began writing for the John Birch Society's weekly, *Review of the News*; he had been writing for the Bircher monthly, *American Opinion*, since 1961.

The break with the *Courier* came when its editors refused to publish Schuyler's attack on the awarding of the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize to Martin Luther King, Jr. William Loeb published it instead: "Neither directly nor indirectly has Dr. King made any contribution to world (or even domestic) peace. Methinks the Lenin Prize would have been more appropriate, since it is no mean feat for one so young to acquire 60 Communist front citations. . . . Dr. King's principal contribution to world peace has been to roam the country like some sable Typhoid Mary, infecting the mentally disturbed with perversions of Christian doctrine, and grabbing fat lecture fees from the shallow-pated." Though some of the major black newspapers continued to publish into the 1960's, their owners' eagerness to accommodate the civil rights movement merely hastened their demise as journalistic, as well as black, institutions.

Those who control the "civil rights" apparatus today cannot comprehend a George S. Schuyler or the black America in which such a man could succeed. Thus we have DuBois, Jr., a.k.a. Henry Louis "Skip" Gates, imposing DuBois' least impressive notion—the hackneyed theory of the alienated, "schizophrenic" black American—on Schuyler, whom he handily disposes of as a "fragmented man." Gates' case for Schuyler's "fragmented" psyche is based on the two novellas Schuyler wrote as "Samuel I. Brooks," which are collected as *Black Empire—The Black Internationale: Story of Black Genius Against the World* and *Black Empire: An Imaginative Story of a Great New Civilization in Modern Africa*.

The two main characters in both stories are the evil genius Dr. Henry Belsidus and the intrepid young reporter Carl Slater, who becomes Belsidus's protégé and confidante. Belsidus, abortionist to the "ladies" of white society and leader of a criminal organization marked by martial discipline, uses the money from the white women (who are variously his mistresses, patronesses, clients, and crime victims) and from the tithes of his cynical Church of Love to finance his scientific research and to raise a secret military force, with which he plans to liberate Africa from the yoke of white colonialism and eventually to take over the world.

Schuyler's *Black Internationale* played to any number of supposed "black fantasies": stealing from, ravishing, plundering, and ultimately killing pale white beauties; the violent black criminal as liberator; the black church as a potentially unstoppable world power; the belief that the world is run by secret societies and conspiracies; and finally, the revan-

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chist dream of a bloody, black insurrection against The Enemy. In making Belsidus not only ruthless and violent, but suavely intelligent, Schuyler went beyond the literary tradition of the black liberator. A fan of science fiction, he also filled many of his stories with futuristic technology otherwise absent in black literature.

But Schuyler also wrote articles and fiction of a black nationalist bent under his own name, such as his response to Mussolini's 1936 invasion of Ethiopia. He knew the history of heroic Negro achievement, and he engaged the popular black historian, J.A. Rogers, to write a feature on black heroes for the *Courier*. But if Schuyler went, in a few years, from being the most popular to the most isolated black journalist in America, it was not because his views had grown eccentric; the man who had argued during the 1920's and 30's for intermarriage as the cure for racism had always been eccentric. He may have become increasingly anticommunist after the war, but anticommunism was sweeping the nation. Besides, as Schuyler tirelessly pointed out, communism posed one of the greatest threats to black survival in the United States: its revolutionary tacticians were ever ready to sacrifice blacks as revolutionary pawns.

No, it was not Schuyler so much as black America that changed for the worse. As black leaders marched and demanded and received "right" upon "right" and program upon program from the government, they lost all tolerance for Schuyler. Irony, satire, and rigorous criticism had no place in their world.

Peplow is correct in seeing Schuyler's criticisms of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X as being based on a desire to ensure the survival of black America. Schuyler saw that the civil rights and black power leaders, no less than Garvey in earlier years, risked provoking a racial explosion that would destroy blacks. As Schuyler wrote about Malcolm X: "It is not hard to imagine the ultimate fate of a society in which a pixilated criminal like Malcolm X is almost universally praised, and has hospitals, schools, and highways named in his memory! . . . We might as well call out the schoolchildren to celebrate the birthday of Benedict Arnold. Or to raise a monument to Alger Hiss. We would do well to remember that all societies are destroyed from within—through weakness, immorality, crime, debauchery, and failing mentality."

What George S. Schuyler understood was that there is no need for radical separation of the races, that there can even be cooperation and trade between the races, if blacks would learn to equate nationalism not with welfare or class warfare but with doing for one's own, within indigenous, self-reliant institutions that tolerate criticism and irony. This requires, however, that blacks drop fantasies of slave-master relations and genocide. And what is true of black nationalism is also true for any white version, as a rise in one will inevitably provoke a rise in the other.

Nicholas Stix writes from New York City.

Robert Penn Warren Remembered

by Timothy Murphy

Reading Joseph Blotner's biography revives my memories of Robert Penn Warren. I was summoned to his rooms at Silliman College on September 5, 1969. I was a freckled, red-haired 18-year-old in whom he may have seen an apparition from his past. "Show me the poems you wrote this summer," he demanded. I produced a sheaf of ragged verse horribly derivative of Dylan Thomas. Glancing through them he pronounced, "Boy, these poems don't scan." "Scan?" I asked, mystified. "You don't know how to scan? What are they teaching you boys these days?" He strode to the blackboard and wrote Donne's sonnet "If poysonous minerals." He then scanned and recited the poem, so overstressing every sibilant that he sprayed spittle on the chalk. John Donne made Red Warren salivate.

Over the course of the next hour I received the only formal training in poetics I ever got. I asked him why he didn't teach courses in poetry. "Can't be taught. Either you've got it or you don't. You do, but you need to be immersed in verse; and the only way is memorization. Next week you'll recite me the first 109 lines of *Paradise Lost* and show me your new poems."

The second week he listened to my recitation, then leafed through the poems and said, "These are good, boy, but what I really want to see are the poems you write during examination week. Next Wednesday you will recite the entirety of Book I, *Paradise Lost*." "But that's 800 lines!" I complained. "Meter and rhyme are powerful mnemonic devices, and I'm training your memory." Eventually I would memorize some 30,000 lines for him.

The first time he took me home to Fairfield was Thanksgiving of that year. As he drove the Range Rover down the Merritt Parkway in sloppy snow he growled, "Boy, have you been reading Thomas Hardy?" "I've been reading his *Selected Poems*," I replied. "Boy, I've been reading his *Collected Poems*." Lesson given, lesson taken. When we arrived at the farm Eleanor was off collecting Gabe and Rosanna from their schools. Hungry, Mr. Warren prepared a bowl of steak tartare and filled two neat glasses with sour mash. Glancing at the new poems he said, "Boy, the first line of a poem has to grab you by the throat and say Poetry the same way this Jack Daniels grabs your throat and says Whiskey."

Weekends at the Warrens' home were convivial affairs where I met people named Cheever, Styron, Steegmuller, people who thought North Dakota was an Indian Reservation. The big house was perched on Redding Road atop an ample slope of pasture fringed with hardwoods where I walked the dog and smoked, no matter how cold it was outside. I asked Mr. Warren whether his hatred of the vice was due to his having smoked himself. "Smoke, boy? Hell, I invented it!"

Stalls on the ground floor of the barn had been converted to make way for a chaotic office. The loft was made into a gymnasium where Gabriel exercised tirelessly. He was a small boy who had inherited his mother's great beauty. Rosanna wasn't quite that lucky. Her teeth bristled with braces. But she fully inherited her parent's intelligence and had a greater *joie de vivre* than any adolescent I have known. To be around her was a delight, and I quite understand why she was the apple of her father's unblinded eye.

Over breakfast I pestered him with questions: "What do you think of *Finnegan's Wake*?" "A very grave mistake by a very great artist." "What do you think of Elizabeth Bishop?" "No fire in the belly." "But Mr. Warren, what about her translations of Carlos Drummond de Andrade?" "Not her belly, boy."

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Other weekends we traveled. I remember peregrinations on snowshoe around his Vermont retreat. I recall a Thanksgiving dinner at Professor Brooks' home, an 18th-century farmhouse lovingly removed from upper New England and reassembled board by board in the hills above New Haven. The antique beams were so low that I had to stoop, and I remember William Wimsatt, who was seven feet tall, propping his chin on one of those beams and gazing down on the proceedings like a curious, great horned owl.

In 1972, Mr. Warren was in Europe and his liver nearly failed. Yale flew him home by ambulance jet, and I went to see him. His color was jaundiced. I read him poems which revealed my homosexuality. He retorted, "That has no place in poetry!" It was the most stinging rebuke I'd ever received from any man other than my father. Two weeks later my parents attended my graduation. One of their first dates at the University of Minnesota was the stage debut of *All the King's Men*. I took them to the hospital where they thanked Mr. Warren for fostering so wayward a boy.

For a man of such scholarly attainment, Warren held academia in contempt. Once I was sitting at Sterling Library's book return desk with 12 books about Wallace Stevens. When Warren walked up I asked which ones I should read. He said, "Send those books back to the stacks, and read Wallace Stevens for yourself."

His advice was infallible. "If you're going to persist in this mad pursuit of meter and rhyme, you better get in touch with Dickie Wilbur, 'cause he's the best man we've got." I asked him to recommend me for the post of poet-in-residence at Phillips Exeter. He flat-out refused. "You've spent your life surrounded with juvenile minds, and that's the last thing you need. If I had it to do over again, I'd never be an academic. Go home boy. Buy a farm. Sink your toes in that rich soil, and grow some roots." Lesson given, lesson taken.

Those two pieces of advice set the course of my life. My struggles as a farmer animate the best of my work. Dick Wilbur proved to be as unfailingly kind and generous as Mr. Warren was. But as our master prosodist he was better able to guide me through the metrical thickets in which I entangled myself. During my tutelage Mr. Warren was finishing *Audubon*, a dark, difficult poem, for which I no longer have much affection. Did a boy's stumbling, fumbling attempts at prosody amuse him? I hope so. These days when lads bring me verses, I begin, "Boy, this doesn't scan."

Teachers transmit knowledge, but a great teacher seduces and infuses young minds with passion for learning. By force of personality he manipulates pliant lives. Robert Penn Warren was a great teacher.

Timothy Murphy is a poet from Fargo, North Dakota, whose poems can be found in this issue. A collection of Mr. Murphy's verse, with a preface by Richard Wilbur, will be published next year by Story Line Press.

Belated Bloomsday

by Patrick J. Walsh

June 16 is Bloomsday, named after the character of Leopold Bloom in James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Joyce's huge book takes place all on that long June day in 1904—250,000 words long, that is.

We are told that *Ulysses* is one of the most important books of the century. We are told it is an intelligent book. But who amongst us has ever had a serious and satisfying intellectual discussion of the book? Dare we ask who has truly read it?

Ulysses seems to encourage false postures and impostors of bourgeois bohemia—those bores who eagerly call themselves "artist" and who create no art. It has also been a boon to academia, to the producers of thesis papers, and to those who hold literary conferences. There are so many theories about the book that it keeps this crowd away from the unemployment queue, enabling them to wander further around in mazes lost.

Those who seek to solve the riddle of the great *Ulysses* can do it with one blinding strike of the pike. You can put out the eye of that giant, dumb Cyclops by reading "An Analysis Of The Mind Of James Joyce," a short essay in a very intelligent book by Wyndham Lewis entitled *Time and Western Man*. Lewis, a contemporary of Joyce, picked up the thread to lead us out of the Joycean labyrinth and examined much of what is wrong with the intellect in our age.

Therein is examined the all-in-one-day scheme, the obsession with time, the interior monologue, and the tendency of modern man to create his own reality, his own country, whose borders are the walls of his skull.

For modern man is mind in isolation. To his own peril man hovers, as Melville said, over Descartean vortices. Heed well, ye pantheist! Joyce's *Ulysses* starts with a mockery of what once united European civilization—the Mass. Soon thereafter the book, like Western culture, breaks up into solipsistic soliloquies.

Joyce took refuge from our troubled times inside his mind, creating a dream world of Victorian Dublin. Since the Renaissance and so-called Enlightenment, man has turned away from God, thinking himself not only the master but creator of his world. We have closed down the cloistered orders and have cloistered ourselves within our minds. The so-called Enlightenment and scientific method encourage us to throw out all things of tradition and human knowledge unless they can be rationally proved. The modern mind today is at the mercy of these rational experts. Yeats (whom Joyce arrogantly dismissed as someone he had met too late to help) had taken the pulse of our agonally breathing civilization. He saw correctly and was deeply troubled that—

> Ancient lineaments are blotted out
> Irrational streams of blood are staining earth
> Empedocles has thrown all things about
> Hector is dead there's a light in Troy

Joyce posed and "pared his fingernails," unconcerned about his country's struggle for independence and two world wars. He cared not for his time nor for history or tradition. In *Ulysses* all that exists, exists only for now. The past has no significance except as the "I" imagines it.

Ulysses smashes all unities of time and space and the reader is swallowed into the vortex of the Joycean modern mind. Lewis does not deny Joyce's skill. He does criticize the trend in Joyce and other modern writers to escape our Western inheritance and tradition of thought to wallow in the primitive unconscious.

Lewis calls the stream of conscious-

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ness a "barbaric technique, an illusion dear to man in his decadence, the belief that an impoverished consciousness may be enriched by an uprush of unconscious vitality. As a chthonic creature man hopes to be born again from the same womb. He wishes to be either pure organism or pure spirit, but he is condemned to be man." The Joycean world is not a world of hard crisp reality or intellect. It is a vague one of timelessness and flux that conforms to the dominant ideologies of the age—Scientism, Evolutionism, Freudianism, etc. Behind it all is the dead idea that man is minutia that is acted upon like a puppet rather than a special creature who thinks and acts.

"So timeless seemed the grey warm air, so fluid and impersonal." This quotation from Joyce is demonstrative of the modern idea that eternity is imprisoned in its unchangeableness; God, too, is a distant prisoner of His own eternal plan. This intellectual naiveté looks at God in human terms. Eternity is thus misunderstood in a purely negative sense as "timelessness," as the opposite to time, as something that cannot make its influence felt in time. In short, there is no Holy Spirit. This is the despair of the modern mind-set. It lends itself to feelings of extreme loneliness, uselessness, and futility. It turns the mind in on itself. This is the modern equivalent of a very ancient and destructive heresy called gnosticism. It is the fundamental problem of the modern world.

With all his dramatization of Catholic education and talk of St. Thomas Aquinas, Joyce, the product of a corrupt Irish clericalism, did not understand the true nature of what it means to be Catholic nor the truth about grace, love, and the Holy Spirit. This is why there is a coldness and pride in his work.

Much is made of the Joycean technique of "epiphany." But it should be understood as a secular epiphany, one trapped in time that does not see through to the nature of things. Since rejecting the Holy Spirit, modern man cannot reconcile his eternal element of being with the world, and so he creates his own world. He becomes his own God in his own mind, with such terrible consequences in this century.

Lewis sees Joyce as conforming to his time and being coldly indifferent to a modern cultural problem where things are very debased—with a universal conformity of puppet people who never think for themselves but do as they are instructed by the mass society so as to avoid thought, the exercise of free will, suffering, and all that makes a real human being. All the world—O'Connell Bridge included—is falling, falling down, falling down, while Joyce hides behind thick indifferent lenses. Patrick Kavanagh, a great modern poet and prophetic critic, said that Joyce was not building up a patrimony like Dante but was engaged in "spending our spiritual patrimony, leading us away from the Ideal to utter emptiness and futility, and that history would deal savagely with such spenders."

Nothing heroic happens in this *Ulysses*. No adventures present themselves to this inner traveler. No monsters met. No Circe circumvented. Nothing! Bloom meets Daedalus. Bloom masturbates. Molly adulterates. There is no recognized home to which to return. Modern man is adrift. There is no abiding city. When the rosy fingers of dawn appear, we are assaulted by words and endless excursions into the mind. Words and sounds take the place of constructive thought and action. Words are beat, beat, beaten into you. All is awhirl like the pounding thump of modern dance, or the disorder of jazz.

For Lewis, the artist must be intelligent and stand outside the conformity of his era. With T.S. Eliot, he believed the artist should be heterodox when everyone else is orthodox in order to bring man back to the real. The artist must not be an empty cistern to be filled with the prevailing ideology but an overflowing fountain. Lewis sees Joyce as more of a technician than an inventive intelligence, saying, "There is very little going on in the mind of Mr. James Joyce."

This past Bloomsday saw the publication of yet another edition of *Ulysses* edited by another Joycean, one Danis Rose, and published by Picador. The *New York Times* arts page reported the controversy. Mr. Rose said he sought to clarify the text by making 10,000 edits to the 250,000 words. But another Joyce cultist rose up in arms against clarity. Fritz Senn, director of the James Joyce Foundation of Zurich, said "that in trying to make the text clearer, Mr. Rose may have subverted elements that brought genius to *Ulysses*." He added: "I've always enjoyed the passages where you couldn't tell what the author meant."

Another far more interesting controversy will brew with the publication this autumn of a book by Lawrence Rainey of Yale entitled *Institutions of Modernism: Literary Elites and Public Culture*. A synopsis of the book's thesis, "The Real Scandal of Ulysses," was published in the *Times Literary Supplement* on January 31. It seems *Ulysses* and other works of literary modernism manipulate the book market with limited expensive editions bought up by dealers and speculators in order to increase demand and inflate the price. As Professor Rainey writes, "no longer confident that they could appeal to the public sphere in support of their assertions about the aesthetic value of *Ulysses* [they] turned instead to the workings of the market itself, taking its outcomes to be confirmation, even justifications, of their claims." Adds the good professor, "the invisible hand of Adam Smith is not a moral or rational agent, nor can it be an aesthetic agent." One wonders whether this is a demonstration of the third principle in the Joycean trinity of "silence, exile, and cunning."

So perhaps your Bloomsday has been forever punctured. Not to worry. Get out that old Victorian dress, rent a horse, oil a jaunting car, and go for a drive around town. Someone will take your photograph. Everyone (well, most everyone) will believe you most cultured and intelligent. And what, after all, is mass society but solipsistic escape from reality?

Patrick J. Walsh writes from Dorchester, Massachusetts.

LIBERAL ARTS

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RELIGION

White Self-Hatred and the Christian Spirit

by Wayne Allensworth

At the first Congress on Racial Justice and Reconciliation, held in Washington in May, the Reverend Earl W. Jackson, the black director of the mostly white "Samaritan Project" of the Christian Coalition, told 500 mostly black Christians that, despite many blacks' warnings that he was selling out to the "religious right," "our agenda" is "the work of God Almighty, as best we can understand." A white Christian might wonder if this agenda is not that of the Almighty but of the multicultural, anti-American, antiwhite left, for it turns out that the gathering was yet another exercise in white self-hatred masquerading as Christian charity, with Ralph Reed, the former executive director of the Christian Coalition, using the forum to "reach out" to blacks and seek their approval.

The Samaritan Project, according to a report in the *Washington Times*, was launched earlier this year and is funded by the Christian Coalition's "donor base." The Reverend Jackson's group received a grant of some $850,000 from the project to "rebuild burned churches." Never mind that the whole "church burning" episode (supposedly the work of a "racist" conspiracy) turned out to be a hoax, that many white churches had also been burned, and that law enforcement officials had confirmed that church arson is quite common. As so often happens in such cases, the story took on a life of its own in defiance of truth and common sense. Mr. Reed was on hand to do penance for the white race ("We come not in self-righteousness, but in repentance") and to extend a helping hand to blacks, long "ignored" by the Republican Party.

Mr. Reed, it appears, also came to perform a common ritual for conservatives, that of seeking the dominant left's approval by confirming its agenda. After reiterating the myth about the racist burning of black churches, he then endorsed the left's entire antiwhite agenda, agreeing that "racial injustices" were common in bank loans (blacks have a right to loans no matter what their credit record may be), in real estate (the government should force whites to rent or sell to someone based on their race), in inner-city funding (the government should pour billions of additional tax dollars into welfare programs), and in prison sentences for blacks (black criminals are "overrepresented" in prisons). Mr. Reed even expressed dismay over the number of whites who did not feel they owed blacks an apology.

It is odd enough that a Christian, apart from the principle of Original Sin, should endorse the notion of collective guilt, and odder still that Mr. Reed apparently believes he can seek collective absolution for the white race. But the oddest of Mr. Reed's oddball ideas is that conservatives can win the "black vote" at all. Why, the befuddled leaders of the predominantly white, middle- and working-class "religious right" wonder, wouldn't their agenda appeal to a great number of blacks? The answer lies in a fundamental need that the Christian Coalition's leaders deny, the human need for group identity that defines the individual and his kin and sets the boundaries of his primary loyalties—something that, until very recently, Christians saw as normal and necessary. The fact is that most blacks will never be able to buy into a conservative, constitutionalist program precisely because such a program would involve betraying their kith and kin by stripping the federal government of the very (unconstitutional) powers that ended racial discrimination. Moreover, in the minds of many blacks, a reversal of the civil rights acts and the rollback of the powers of the federal courts would leave them undefended from renewed racial discrimination, no matter how many times well-meaning whites assure them that conservatives have no such plans.

For other blacks, the end of affirmative action means the loss of something that they appear to enjoy: the sweet but poisonous taste of revenge. Black nationalists are correct insofar as they recognize themselves as a separate people with interests divergent from those of whites. They are African-Americans or black Americans, after all, never just plain Americans. Radicals go further, however, enjoying the indulgence of white self-hatred that forums like that of the Christian Coalition offer. The Reverend Melvin Tuggle II of Baltimore, for instance, told "white Christianity" to "put your money where your mouth is," that is, to pay up and like it, even as the Samaritan Project, funded by mostly white Christian Coalition donors, forked over a better part of a million dollars to rebuild black churches.

By now, it should be clear that the actions of Mr. Reed and his followers are part of a cult with well-rehearsed rituals. A common method of editorializing in conservative newspapers and journals, for example, is the "some of my best friends are black" argument. In this ritual, the white editorialist notes that he played with black kids as a child, or treated a black maid like a member of the family, before attacking a race-based program favored by the left. Another is the "look who said it" approach, where a black libertarian is quoted damning affirmative action, or an Hispanic is cited endorsing immigration reform; as the reasoning goes, if a black or Hispanic says it, then it must be all right. But the most common ritual is the worship of Martin Luther King, Jr. The thrust of these exercises is the tacit acknowledgment of the left's favorite theme: that there is something sinister about those who oppose race-based quotas or favor immigration reform. Hitler, it turns out, was a Republican.

White self-hatred buys nothing but contempt from blacks and prevents conservatives from mounting a serious campaign to restore a constitutional republic. Until they realize this and face the truth about the implications of what they preach, those on the political right will remain impotent, and the society they desire for their children will become just another lost cause for conservatives to mourn.

Wayne Allensworth writes from Purcellville, Virginia.

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Church Arson Mania

by Mark Tooley

A recent report by the federally appointed National Church Arson Task Force has confirmed that there never was any evidence of an upsurge in racist, fiery attacks upon black churches, despite the media spotlight of last year. The report told us little that is actually new. Insurance statistics showing that 500-600 churches suffer arson every year were largely ignored, and no comprehensive data ever indicated that black churches were any more vulnerable to attack than white churches.

Still, the federal report was greeted with headlines expressing surprise. For most Americans, it was news that the task force had found no evidence of a racist plot, found that more white churches than black churches were suffering arson, found no evidence that racism had motivated more than a small minority of arsonists, and found that only two or three out of 199 suspects so far arrested for church arson have had ties to white supremacist groups.

Actually, the chief originator of the church arson mania, the Atlanta-based Center for Democratic Renewal (CDR), has admitted that white churches were burning at *five times* the rate of black churches. According to the National Council of Churches (NCC), which was the CDR's chief partner in pushing church burnings as a media event, 20 percent of America's churches are black.

Despite this admission, and despite the federal task force's findings, the church arson lobby continues to fulminate. In June, at a NCC-sponsored convocation in Washington called "No More Burnings, No More Hate," speakers repeated the NCC's and the CDR's usual inflammatory rhetoric. They were preparing for "Phase II" of the NCC's Burned Churches Project, which will go beyond church reconstruction to focus on eliminating the "root causes" of racism.

Featured speaker Jesse Jackson blasted conservatives for their stances on welfare reform and affirmative action, chided President Clinton for supporting government downsizing, faulted the media for losing interest in church arson, criticized black preachers who focus on salvation to the exclusion of politics, and mocked the racial reconciliation efforts of the evangelical Promise Keepers movement. "The right-wing church supported slave laws and segregation laws," thundered Jackson, as he slammed conservative Christians as especially prone to racism. That evangelicals formed the backbone of the Abolitionist movement he seemed not to recall. He warned of a "right-wing" theology that threatens to infect both white and black churches, and ignores the liberal social action that Jackson believes is mandatory for the church.

The NCC said it will work closely with Reverend Jackson on its "Phase II" activities, which will proceed in part thanks to the generosity of the former "Queen of Mean," Leona Helmsley, who has donated $1 million to the NCC's Burned Churches Fund. Having raised over $11 million in total, the NCC and the CDR have little reason to admit that their claims about church arson as an emblem of surging American racism have not withstood close scrutiny.

At the Washington convocation, a defiant CDR spokesperson condemned the work of the National Church Arson Task Force, declaring that its report had "sabotaged" the CDR's racial justice effort. Just a few months ago, the CDR released its own report purporting to prove a nationwide conspiracy against black churches, orchestrated by white supremacist groups.

"We'll continue to work with you," said the CDR's Rose Johnson to the federal task force. "But we don't have to buy or believe anything you say. We're not going to accept that." Meanwhile, NCC general secretary Joan Brown Campbell insisted that most white churches that have burned are actually "racially mixed." She explained, "That seems to incite as much as anything else."

Race and racism are fixations for the religious left, for whom sin is nearly always societal (racism, corporate greed, militarism) and rarely personal (adultery, intoxication, envy). While attending the "No More Burnings, No More Hate" conference, I found more theological and ethical sophistication among some of the pastors of burned churches who were there as guests of the NCC. A white Pentecostal pastor from Iowa, for example, told me that his church had been burned by a drug addict, who was upset over his Christian girlfriend's attachment to the church. Because the nearly all-white church conducts an Hispanic ministry, the NCC had classified his church as a potential victim of racism. The NCC loaned a trailer for Sunday School classes, but the church received cash support from the Christian Coalition, Promise Keepers, and the National Association of Evangelicals. The pastor said he did not entirely agree with the political agenda of the NCC and wished there were more emphasis on local church ministry.

A black pastor from Mississippi told me his church had burned and that the police found no evidence of arson, but he was still suspicious. Some local churches had been supportive, but the local newspaper had nearly ignored the burning. At a special service of reconciliation at the church, the town's mayor showed up intoxicated and berated the congregation for the volume of its music.

President Clinton, probably realizing that the church arson hype is now exhausted, declined the NCC's invitation to address its Washington meeting. We can only hope that the country has learned its lesson and will decline the next invitation to join the religious left's crusade against phantom threats.

Mark Tooley is a research associate at the Institute on Religion and Democracy in Washington, D.C.

LANGUAGE

The Latest Dope From Washington

by Frank Ruddy

Tarry not, I pray you, Madam," Walter Raleigh is supposed to have cautioned Queen Elizabeth, "for the wings of time are tipped with the feathers of death." As Harold Macmillan observed a few years ago: "Civil servants don't write memos like that anymore." Some have trouble just speaking the language. Nicholas Burns, the State Department spokesman and Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, said at a recent press conference that Madeleine Albright's religion was "a personal matter *for she and her family*." Ouch!

Burns is not alone, of course, but to

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paraphrase Winston Churchill, infinite is the debt owed to those who want to speak strongly but do not know how. "Literally" is a case in point. Stephanie Fawcett of the National Archives said that thanks to the recently declassified material on the Cuban missile crisis, "You are *literally* a fly on the wall in the White House." Ohio Representative Jim Traficant said by dumping tomatoes on the American market, "Mexico is *literally* throwing tomatoes at Uncle Sam." We know what they mean, of course, but *literally* turns us into real flies, like Jeff Goldblum, and Mexico into a giant Fernando Valenzuela bouncing real tomatoes off a real Uncle Sam.

Washington lawyer/writer Bruce Fein reported that no one could read Armando Valladares' book about life in Cuban prisons "without feeling *nauseous*." Valladares' jailer, Fidel, may be nauseous (i.e., causing nausea), but Valladares' readers were *nauseated*, made ill.

A recent episode of television's *The Simpsons* makes a point Washington insiders should note: "Proactive and paradigm; aren't they words dumb people use to sound smart?" George Orwell could not have said it better. New words occur when the old ones have become too vague: *e-mail*, *voice mail*, as distinguished from *snail mail*, for example. But has leftist jargon so infiltrated our language that even the staunchly conservative Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen must use "proactive," as she did in a recent article, just to show that she is not a reactionary? I hope not. "Paradigm," on the other hand, is a real word to describe things like the conjugations of verbs and declensions of nouns. Thomas Kuhn appropriated the term to describe the state of scientific knowledge at a given time, until a new paradigm replaces it. Nevertheless, it is what Westbrook Pegler called an "out-of-town word," and paradigm-users, like sociologists who use mathematical-looking formulas with Greek letters to conceal simplistic notions, should raise eyebrows.

"Parameter" is another suspect word. When my computer advises me: "No such *parameter*, Humanoid," it is using the word correctly to say that I have given the wrong characteristics of whatever I am looking for. Even the late Malcolm Baldridge, the formidable former Secretary of Commerce, nodded on this one. In the wonderful little memo he sent around Washington pleading for plain English, he excommunicated *parameter* and suggested that *boundary* or *limit* be used instead. Oh, the horror!

"Begging the question" is becoming the highfalutin equivalent of "prompts" or "raises the question." Washington talking-head Jim Glassman always misuses it in this way on his Sunday *Capital Gang* show. "Begging the question" is a literal translation from Latin of a lawyer's trick: pretending something that has to be proved has already been proved. When former Secretary of State James Baker, writing in the *New York Times*, defended the Chemical Weapons Treaty against charges that it would undermine national security, Baker argued that "the idea that Ronald Reagan and George Bush would negotiate a treaty detrimental to this nation's security was grotesque." Baker was "begging the question" whether the treaty was safe to ratify by recasting it as whether presidents Reagan and Bush would sell out the country, as if the answer to that question resolved all doubts about the treaty itself.

Archaic expressions are especially attractive to the chattering class and potential "petards." In opposing various religious groups who were calling for federal intervention to protect a church from a Texas zoning law, Washington public television personality Bonnie Erbe wrote: "This legal claim hoists the religious conservatives by their own fatuous *petard*." "Petard" is an old French word for a bomb. "Hoist" in this context means being blown up by a bomb you yourself set, as happened when sappers dallied. "Fatuous" means silly or foolish. If I ever have to defuse a petard, I hope it *is* a fatuous one.

The Spanish writer Ortega y Gasset observed that it is a characteristic of our time that the commonplace has the assurance to impose itself wherever it will, crushing traditions of excellence and professionalism. He might have added that it's good for a few yuks, too. The Associated Press announced that a 1997 New Hampshire law imposes jail terms "for hunters who shoot someone while drunk." Sober people are apparently still fair game. Even the *Writer's Digest School*, which is in the business of knowing better, entices new students with "free gifts." A gift by definition *is* free. A British journalist reported that the Oxford and Cambridge Club was admitting women because the student bodies of both universities were now "almost entirely bi-sexual." (I suspected as much when I was at Cambridge, but now the secret is out.)

For most of this century, *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage*, written by H.W. Fowler and later edited by Sir Ernest Gowers, has been a conspicuous exception to the mediocrity Ortega y Gasset lamented. Fowler's was the *arbiter elegantiae* of English usage and the bane of ugly and barbarous language. No more. Under the new editor, Robert Burchfield, Fowler's passion for proper English, like Fowler himself, has been eliminated from all but the title. As is appropriate for a politically correct age, *The New Fowler's Modern English Usage: Third Edition* does not concern itself with how English *should* be spoken but rather how it *is* spoken, by everybody from comic strip characters to rappers. It is not a guide. It is a Sears word catalogue. Just pick out what you want.

Dizzy Dean—who used to say things like, "He slud into third," when he was broadcasting games for the St. Louis Cardinals—got in hot water with local English teachers. Dizzy had the grace to say, "I'll have to quit broadcasting if I have to talk proper." Today it is just the reverse. If Dizzy had stuck around a little longer, he might have been the spokesman for the State Department.

Frank Ruddy is a former U.S. ambassador who now practices law in Washington, D.C.

LIBERAL ARTS

THE COMPASSION POLICE

"A wide range of predators victimize illegal immigrants. Guides and organized gangsters have robbed, raped, and killed them or forced them to work in sweatshops or prostitution rings to pay off the cost of the trip. . . . Xenophobes and hatemongers terrorize them. . . . The fact that illegal immigration is a crime makes the immigrants particularly vulnerable because they are unlikely to seek the protection of the law."

—from the June 1997
National Institute of Justice Journal,
a publication of the
U.S. Department of Justice

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The Hundredth Meridian

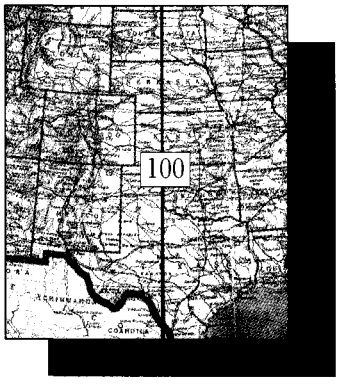
by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

The Seventh Day

The first thing you notice is the heat and the intensity of the light, glaring on the white-painted adobe walls of Mesilla where Indian rugs, sun-rotted and sun-faded, hang behind deeply recessed windows barred with iron. Stepping out from the coolness of San Albino on the plaza after Mass into the blinding Sunday noon had a final quality, like dying suddenly and seeing God face-to-face. The tourists outside the church watched from a safe distance as the congregation emerged, as if we were extras in an historical recreation or a multicultural pageant. Even with the tourists, the silence at noon was nearly as striking as the stillness, and the heat. Across the plaza the barman at the Double Eagle drew the first glass of beer beneath the polished wood and glass overhang of the massive backbar, brought all the way from Chicago where it was once a fixture in the Hotel Drake.

In Doña Ana the air had a perceptible bite from acres of ripening chili peppers. I found the horses shaded up in their stalls; they emerged reluctantly at my call, extending only their heads and necks beyond the adobe wall. Out on Redland Drive the neighbors' horses whinnied from the orchard at the end of the road; roosters crowed; somewhere a peacock screamed. In the backyard were catbirds, grackles, and a bobwhite quail. The catbirds softly cried, the grackles racketed, the quail bobwhited from the willow, fig, peach, and apricot trees. The house with its narrow windows shaded by the portal remains cavelike throughout most of the summer days.

It faces east, giving a view of the Organ Mountains thrusting from the desert floor through deltoid upsweeps of grass, pancake pear, mesquite, and yucca. The mountains change, almost from one minute to the next, with alteration in the light produced by the traveling sun, and by atmospheric humidity. Change is registered in color, in density, in texture, and in perceived depth, the range progressing daily from the single dimension of a theatrical backdrop through the second and third dimensions until, around



sunset, it achieves the mystical qualities of a fourth—fleetingly, aided by the moist opacity of the evening light. Because it is humid in the south-central deserts of New Mexico in August, which is the monsoon season here.

At dawn the mountain peaks are obscured by cloud, the pediments shrouded in a bright white mist. By mid-morning the clouds have lifted away from the mountains and vanished, the sky is blue overhead and very hot, and the horizon distant and clear. Near three o'clock or sooner, if sufficient moisture is being borne in the atmosphere, early thunderheads are building in the west. Other days storms amass above the eastern mountains and spread westward, a phenomenon I have never witnessed in Utah and Wyoming. They are discrete, sharply defined systems of chaos in an elsewhere serene field of blue sky saturated with sunlight, preceded by violent winds and blinding clouds of red dust soon beaten down and muddied by the advancing rain, and producing fiery displays of corded, muscular lightning, baseball-sized hail, and flash floods. Unlike summer storms in the north, the monsoons do not clear the air but leave it heavy and still at evening, impregnated with moisture that persists through the night. Monsoons ordinarily are a daily summertime occurrence in the upper Sonoran desert where they operate like clockwork, but this year Arizona has experienced drought, while New Mexico's own hit-or-miss system has been mostly hit.

America is the promised land for automobiles, not people. This is true especially of American cities, and Las Cruces, New Mexico, is home to some 70,000 human inhabitants now, not counting the vehicular population. In America, cars stable their humans in humble sheds painted brightly and decorated with flowers and trees, as people once maintained the horses that were the Neanderthal automobiles. Contrary to what James Burnham thought, cars are the new American elite to which even the bureaucratic and managerial class defers, as evidenced by the time and attention it devotes to creating a more abundant life for its automotive masters. For someone who has spent the last 20 years in an isolated community of a couple of thousand people, and whose only previous urban experience is of New York City (the automobile equivalent of feudal Europe), moving to a city built to automotive specifications and architecturally designed to suit the aesthetic tastes of automobiles is a shock. So far as the American city of today is unlivable, the automobile—not gangs, or even ethnic politicians—is the chief culprit.

To escape the city and the traffic, hoping to find a trail into the Robledo Mountains, I took the highway north, up the valley of the Rio Grande from Las Cruces to Hatch, an agricultural town that calls itself the Chili Capital of the World and feels as much like Old as it does New Mexico. Following a channel cutting down through tilted strata of weathering rock, the gray-green river pushes along past grassy bottoms and mesquite thickets, vernally fresh and green from the recent rains. Several miles south of Hatch the Border Patrol had set its orange cones out, diverting northbound traffic toward the checkpoint where the Mexican-American officer on duty looked into the bed of the pickup and inquired, in a heavily accented voice, if I were an American citizen. It occurred to me to recount for him the anecdote in which the Duke of Wellington, when asked if he is Mr. Smith, replies, "My good man, if you can believe that, you can believe anything." But the application was elliptical or inverted, and the Border Patrol deserves our support and respect. In Hatch this Sunday morning a chili shop sold *ristras* and T-shirts to the tourists, while outside the church the local congregation stood con-

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versing after Mass, the men uniformly shaded by their wide straw hats.

Abandoning the search for a way up to the Robledos, I returned to town and drove out on Highway 70 toward San Augustin Pass, in the Organ Mountains. East of the pass the country changes dramatically with the wide valley stretching north and south between the Organs and the Sacramento Mountains. The greater part of the valley is occupied by the White Sands Missile Range, closed away from the public behind locked gates posted with signs reading *AVISO*, WARNING, NO PHOTOGRAPHS (the self-importance, combined with the paranoia, of the United States government). When viewed from the east the Organs appear almost as a different range, curving concavely away from the green valley heavily shadowed this afternoon by storm clouds lifting above the Sacramentos. The Trinity Site, open to the public, lies at the north end of the missile range; eastward, beyond the mountains, is the city of Roswell, currently celebrating a half-century of notoriety. What happened in Roswell 50 years ago—what actually was discovered there—is more of a mystery than sophisticated people wish to think. Strange things have been seen in New Mexico, and continue to be seen. Returning from Albuquerque to Belen some years ago, Jim Rauen observed an unfamiliar contrail across the midafternoon sky: a single vapor trail interrupted at intervals by a sequence of spaces occupied by a pair of vapor dots set side by side. He later described what he had seen to an engineer of his acquaintance, who explained that the trail could have been produced only by a pulse engine. Jim was satisfied, until the man added that the pulse engine, existing only theoretically, had not been built yet. On another occasion Jim's sister Betty, visiting from Chicago, was setting up her telescope on the portal when she and her brother both saw a collection of lights above the Manzano Mountains, like stars doing a kind of celestial jig. The lights moved vertically and horizontally, up and down, backwards and sideways—always at terrific speed and with impossible changes of direction—until, drawing together suddenly, they all at once shot away toward the southwest, followed five minutes later by a flight of fighter planes from the Air Force Base in Albuquerque in hot pursuit. On his way out of the *bosque* along the Rio Grande, carrying his gun and the birds he had shot that evening, a goose hunter from Los Chavez observed the same lights. More recently, a neighbor of Jim's living on Tierra Grande and two friends were amazed to see a strange triangular craft pass overhead, so low—it seemed to them—that they watched breathless, expecting the plane to crash into the mountainside. Instead, it cleared the 10,000-foot summit easily and vanished from sight, causing them to revise their initial estimate of the craft's size, which must have been colossal. What does the federal government know? *AVISO*.

I recrossed the pass to the little town of Organ where I found a dirt road and followed as it skirted the mountains, heading south to Baylor Canyon. On the other side of a low rise something lay stretched on the gravel ahead. I stopped, and lifted a broom from the truck bed. The snake was two feet long and dusty-looking, torpid with the late afternoon heat. I prodded him delicately with the broom; he chose to ignore me. Taking up a handful of light pebbles I tossed them underhand at him; he put his tongue out, but otherwise failed to react. I prodded harder with the broom and was rewarded as the snake came alive all over, whipping sideways into a sinuous striking position and sounding his dry, small, deadly buzz. DON'T TREAD ON ME. You have to admire a rattlesnake; he has more gumption and courage than the average American citizen. He struck and struck again at the broom until I felt a little guilty: a mouthful of bristles is an unpleasant experience by anyone's standard. The rattler dodged sideways and slid under the truck, where he assumed a defensive posture against the tire. Feeling like a boy who has tied a tin can to a dog's tail and repented of it, I chased him from under the tire between the wheels and watched him pile himself up in a circular pyramid, his black tongue flicking, his poison sacs bulging. I drove the truck ahead, and walked back for another look. Now he was coiled down inside himself, only the tip of his snout pointing above the thickness of the outer wrap. Assured that he would not be run over by the next passing vehicle I left him to relax, uncoil, and go in search of an early supper.

Leaving the truck canted in the borrow pit I walked off into the desert in the direction of the mountains, climbing up through lush desert foliage until, looking back, I could see the Rio Grande Trench far away and below and the city within it, spilling onto the mesa. I climbed slowly, admiring the light on the mountains and watching for snakes; preoccupied by the rock, earth, and cactus that drew my attention from the sky. Surprised by thunder I stopped climbing and faced about to the west and a bolus of cloud propelling itself upon the mountains, dazzling white in its upper reaches—sharp-edged against the blue sky—and a wrathful purple-black below, above the slanting rain. The storm came on rapidly, boiling higher into the sky and spreading farther over the desert, and as I ran I heard a voice cry, "Lord, it is good for me to be here!" I took cover between two boulders, close set enough for protection from the lightning but with space between them to observe the onslaught. The whirling dust advanced in a rush and was beaten down by the rain, the wind shrieked and hissed, lightning glared in sheets across black chaos, thunder crashed, and water torrented in the gullies and arroyos.

Soaked by the warm rain I kept my head down and my back against the rock until the storm had passed behind the mountain barrier, emerging after the lightning ceased and the wind had died into a transformed world of light and shadow, sky and cloud, penetrated by insubstantial rock spires and arced by a double rainbow. It seemed an infinitely high world, as if the mountains had been relocated, drawn up into another dimension of existence, and I was hardly surprised to discover, staring into the murk below, that neither the city nor the plain was visible from here at all. ◦c

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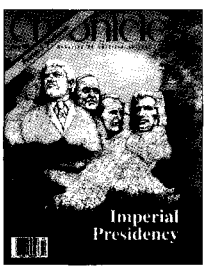

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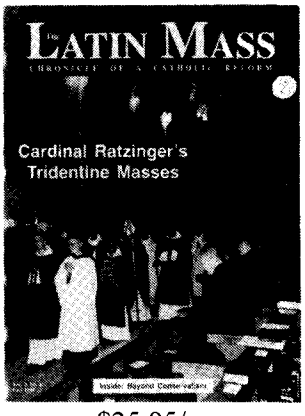

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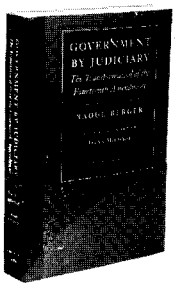

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